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ABSTRACT

Over the last 30 years, California has changed from a predominately white society, with small pockets of Mexican Americans and other minorities, to a society that is one-third ethnic minority. The State educational system has been unable to respond adequately to the needs of non-white students, especially those with poor or inadequate English skills. The achievement gap between rich and poor, and minority and majority, makes neither educational, economic, nor political sense and conflicts with the basic values of the nation. Educators and institutions must regard closing that gap as one of their foremost responsibilities. Changes made will improve education for all students. This report lays out the elements of a strategy to link excellence and equity by drawing on resources inside and outside the schools. The report describes and focuses on the following: (1) demographic trends in California; (2) the educational experience of poor and minority students at various levels of the State's educational system; (3) schools, programs, and practices that have demonstrated success in improving achievement among minority and poor students; and (4) principles and strategies that can be used by educational leadership, schools, communities, parents, business and the media to improve educational results. The text is augmented by numerous tables and figures and illustrated with black and white photographs. (PS)

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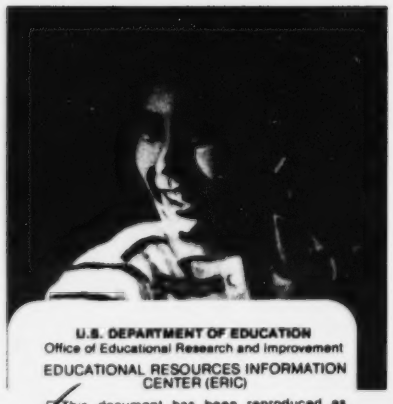

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Excellence for Whom?

A Report From the Planning Committee for The Achievement Council

Prepared by:
Dr. Patricia R. Brown and Kati Haycock

Publication of this report was made possible by grants from California Casualty and the Spencer Foundation Fund for Faculty Research administered by the School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley.

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FOREWORD

In early February of 1984, we received two planning grants—one from California Casualty and one from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation—to lay the groundwork for a new statewide organization, The Achievement Council, that will spearhead a broadbased effort to improve achievement among low-income and minority students in California's schools and colleges. One of our reasons for proposing the formation of this new Achievement Council was the belief that Californians tend to conceptualize the educational opportunity "problem" far too narrowly, focusing their lenses on only one aspect of the matter instead of looking at the full picture. In our view, the time had come to step back from the host of programs designed to deal with only one segment of the problem and to take a broader look at the status of educational opportunity within and across educational levels in this state.

The report on the following pages is an abridged version of what we found during this brief second look. In it, we describe the educational experience of poor and minority youngsters attending California schools and colleges. Because we think it important that all Californians understand the problem of underachievement among poor and minority youngsters, we have tried our best to describe the educational process clearly and in lay language.

Aside from acknowledging our debt to the California Casualty and Hewlett Foundations, we wish to express our gratitude to Dr. Patricia R. Brown and Kati Haycock, who prepared this report for us; to Beryl Nelson and Mahland Ortiz, who assisted Professor Brown in acquiring and analyzing available data; and to the members of our Policy Team—Dr. Charles Benson, Dr. Ann Bouie, Ms. Phyllis Hart, Dr. Genie Matute-Bianchi, Ms. Judy Mayes, Ms. Beryl Nelson, Dr. Arturo Pacheco, Dr. John Ogbu, and Ms. Rosa Perez—who generously shared with us their expertise and ideas. Thanks to Professor Jim Guthrie and the Berkeley/Stanford P.A.C.E. staff, who helped with advice and computing resources. Special words of gratitude are owed to Dr. Theony Condos for her careful editing and to Ms. Nola Marshall, whose wizardry on the word processor lessened the difficulty of our task.

Our deepest and most heartfelt thanks must, however, be reserved for that very dedicated group of school leaders whose feats are chronicled in Part Three of our report. On an otherwise bleak horizon, they—and others like them—give us hope that the problem of underachievement can be overcome. We thank them for incontrovertible proof that poor and minority youth can master even the most complex academic skills and attain the highest levels of educational excellence.

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INTRODUCTION

California is changing—and changing quickly. Over the span of only thirty years, California society has been transformed: from predominantly White, with small pockets of Mexican-Americans and other minorities, to over one-third ethnic minority. And just thirty years from now, our state is projected to have a "minority-majority."

Many Californians welcome the cultural wealth these changes are bringing. They enjoy our new-found diversity, eagerly incorporating a range of new experiences into their lives. Many, too, anticipate significant economic benefits for California, especially given our position on the rim of the Pacific Basin.

THE PROBLEMS—AND OPPORTUNITIES—OF DIVERSITY

We believe, however, that California is not well prepared for some of the problems inherent in its expanding diversity. Of particular concern to us is the apparent inability of our educational system to respond adequately to the needs of non-white students—especially those who are poor or who possess inadequate English skills. Rather than chipping away at the often significant differences in preparation and skills among entering students, our educational system perpetuates—even enlarges—these differences. The achievement gap between poor and rich, minority and majority actually grows as students progress through the elementary and secondary grades. Further, at each of the many branches or transition points in our network of schooling, disproportionate numbers of poor and ethnic minority students are either diverted into programs of lesser quality or shunted aside entirely.

As a result of this gap, the complexion of California's white collar labor force is considerably different from that of the blue collar pool. "Professions" requiring a college education continue to be dominated by Whites from comparatively affluent backgrounds, while "jobs" requiring less education are filled primarily by non-Whites and others from poorer families.

Rather than chipping away at the often significant differences in preparation and skills among entering students, our educational system perpetuates—even enlarges—these differences.

To our dismay, there is little evidence that these patterns are changing—or that they will change in the foreseeable future. Instead, achievement gains at one level of the educational system tend to be followed by declines at higher levels; enrollment increases during one academic year are followed by decreases the next year. In spite of considerable institutional and human effort, the characteristics of students who emerge today from the various termination points of our educational system are remarkably similar to the characteristics of those who exited at those same points ten years ago.

A RATIONALE FOR ACTION

The question is whether California can permit the continued existence of this achievement gap. We submit that the answer to that question must be a resounding "NO!".

First, perpetuation of the achievement gap does not make educational sense.

When young people are educated to less than their full capacities, neither their interests nor the interests of the schools are well served. When schools don't work, students, teachers, and administrators become alienated and leave school—either physically or psychologically. Schools then lose community support and their "products" are ill-prepared for either work or postsecondary education.

Second, perpetuation of the achievement gap does not make economic sense.

California's economy is dependent upon the availability of highly educated labor. In order to maintain that supply over the next several decades it will be necessary, given the declining size of the youth population and the increasing representation of ethnic minorities within that population, to improve educational attainment among those who historically have not reached the highest levels of education. Without improvements of this sort, it will be difficult to guarantee enough well-trained labor to keep California on the economic cutting edge—especially in technical and scientific fields.

Third, perpetuation of the achievement gap does not make political sense.

To perpetuate current achievement and employment patterns in an increasingly heterogeneous society is to risk a severe bifurcation of that society. When most of society's resources, both economic and political, are controlled by a well-educated White minority, the poorly educated "minority-majority" has little incentive to support existing institutions or to participate responsibly in public affairs.

Fourth, perpetuation of the achievement gap conflicts with the fundamental values of our nation.

For many years, we have glibly assured successive generations of American young people that effort will get them ahead, both in school and in life. To ethnic minorities, in particular, we have said since the sixties: "Now that the legal barriers are down, nothing can stop you." Unfortunately, the actual pattern of experience in the homes and communities of poor and minority youngsters—a pattern of under- or unemploy-

ment, discrimination, and shattered hopes—often presents irrefutable evidence that the system works better for those with society's advantages.

In short, there are sound and compelling reasons—educational, economic, political and moral—why California must increase educational achievement among minority and low-income children. In our estimation, virtually everyone stands to gain if the achievement of these students is improved: schools, government, business, parents, and—most of all—our children.

CALIFORNIA'S RECORD ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

California has, of course, already directed considerable energy toward expanding educational opportunities. Since the early 1960s, our state has been a national leader in the effort to achieve equal opportunity in education. Investing from its own funds, California developed policy initiatives, at both the K-12 and postsecondary levels, that have served as models for the national educational opportunity agenda.

As a result of both individual and institutional efforts, educational opportunities for members of low-income and minority groups were significantly expanded during the late sixties and early seventies. By the mid-seventies, however, progress had slowed.

THE PROBLEM PERSISTS

Explanations for the persistence of the achievement gap typically take one of two forms: those that blame the *schools* (for not mounting enough special efforts or for discriminating) and those that blame the *students* and the sociocultural environment that produced them. Our review of the evidence on this topic suggests that there is no single cause of low achievement among poor and minority students. On the contrary, this is an extraordinarily complex problem and there are no easy solutions.

How, then, do we proceed? Do we need to create a new program to address the cause of each individual problem we identify? We think not. For one thing, special add-on responses to student problems have not proven themselves capable of generating significant improvements in student achievement and sustaining those improvements over time. For another, it seems to us inappropriate (and slightly ridiculous) to mount a series of "affirmative action" programs for ethnic and poor youngsters and then to consider our obligation to those youngsters fulfilled: they are, after all, over half of our student population. Does a school with an enrollment over 80% Black have to have a special program to increase Black achievement . . . or does the whole school have that responsibility?

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In our view, the time has come for all educators and educational institutions to acknowledge that it is their responsibility to improve achievement among minority and low-income students—that, while they often need extra resources or programs to help them improve student achievement, the final responsibility rests with the schools themselves. We say this because, in all of the evidence on this topic, one thing is abundantly clear: no matter how great the social and economic problems of its clientele, the school can make a difference. Educational institutions that establish clear *expectations* for student achievement and provide adequate *assistance* and *incentives* for students to perform can make significant improvements in student achievement levels.

In many California schools, however, especially those attended by minority and poor students, conditons are simply not conducive to academic achievement. Even in schools of a higher quality, teacher and administrator attitudes toward minority students frequently combine with other factors to limit severely the number of minority students taking advantage of academic opportunities available to them. Clearly, substantial improvement in the schools is a necessary precondition to increased educational opportunity.

SCHOOL REFORM

There are, to be sure, many efforts currently underway to improve the public schools. Nationally, no fewer than ten reports on the "crisis" in public education have been released during the past two years. A number of reports have been completed in California, as well, many of the recommendations contained in those reports were incorporated in last year's omnibus school reform bill, SB 813, which sought, among other things, to raise graduation standards, improve teacher salaries, and increase counseling services.

In our view, however, the current demands for excellence in education, no matter how eloquent, threaten to have the same limited impact as did the reforms of previous decades. Previous reforms failed by imposing a new set of programs or demands on the schools without reference to how they fit into the general goals of education, the needs of different kinds of students, the continuum of education from elementary through postsecondary levels, or the relationship between school and work. Without direct attention to these broader questions, the main beneficiaries of educational reforms tend to be a small cadre of students and schools. Changing tides don't, in other words, raise or lower all boats equally—at least not in education.

The real issue in educational reform is not excellence or mediocrity. The issues are excellence for whom and by what standards. In our view, a school that sends one-third of its students to top-ranked colleges, has a 30% drop-out rate, and provides no direction for the remaining students is not an excellent school—even if its CAP and SAT scores are impressive. Neither is the school that fails to recognize and confront the fact that most of its White and upper-income students are enrolled in college prep courses, while most of its poor and minority students are in vocational or general track courses. In such schools, only those who already know how to learn will benefit from moves toward excellence in education.

The real issue in educational reform is not excellence or mediocrity. The issues are excellence for whom and by what standards.

The problem facing California schools is larger than just increasing SAT scores, the rate of college attendance and proficiency in math and science. In addition to these standards of excellence, the State and the school system must address how to include the diverse population of California in the move upwards. Middle and low achievers must be included along with high achievers; Blacks and Chicanos along with Whites and Asians; poor youngsters along with rich. Excellence and equity must be addressed together.

THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

While it is clear to us that schools can—and must—improve achievement levels among poor and minority students regardless of conditions in the surrounding communities, it is also clear that a strategy involving the community would generate greater change in school achievement patterns. Education, after all, does not happen in isolation: it is inextricably connected with economic conditions, social pressures, cultural expressions, housing patterns, technological development and implicit national and state objectives.

While it is clear to us that schools can—and must—improve achievement levels among poor and minority students regardless of conditions in the surrounding communities, it is also clear that a strategy involving the community would generate greater change in school achievement patterns.

There is mounting evidence, for example, that despite strong parental encouragement to do well in school, young members of domestic minority groups respond to other cues in their environment that discourage student effort. At a very early age, these youngsters absorb the negative experiences of the adults around them—unemployment, underemployment, and dead-end jobs. Even though the job ceiling for ethnic minorities has been penetrated and other instances of discrimination appear to be waning, limits persist and the vestiges of past discrimination are still very much apparent, even to the young. These perceptions are reinforced in school, where teachers and administrators often have low expectations of minority students. Then, as ethnic adolescents seek part-or full-time work, their beliefs about the limited opportunities available to them are likely to be further reinforced because more than one-half the minority youth seeking employment are unable to find work.

As a result of perceptions about available opportunities, many members of domestic (as opposed to immigrant) minority groups do not regard school as an avenue to economic success and consequently do not take full advantage of the opportunities available there. Instead, they adopt a set of behaviors that are counterproductive in school: ethnic minority youth tend to conceptualize high achievement as "White" and therefore inappropriate for them. Without efforts to change these attitudes and behaviors, as well as the conditions that give rise to them, improvements in our educational system will narrow—but never close—the achievement gap.

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The ethnic community itself can play an especially critical role in the move to improve student achievement. Students who are encouraged to exert themselves in school by individuals and organizations they hold in high esteem are more likely to put forth the necessary effort than students who are encouraged only by their schools—or not encouraged at all. Business, social services, and the media also have important support roles in the move to improve student achievement.

A STRATEGY FOR CALIFORNIA

In the following pages, we begin to lay out the elements of a strategy to link excellence and equity by drawing on resources inside and outside the schools. Our report is presented in four parts. Part 1 provides a summary of demographic trends in California. Part 2 provides an analysis of the experiences of poor and minority students at various levels of the state's educational system. Part 3 discusses some of the schools, programs and practices that have demonstrated success in improving achievement among minority and poor students. In Part 4 we move one step further to suggest some ways in which progress can be extended statewide. In our view, the steps suggested here will make public education in this state better for everyone, not just for poor and minority students.

We have a vision of California's future. A vision wherein human opportunity is not restricted by race, family background, or any other irrelevant factor. A vision wherein a Black or Chicano child is no less likely to become a physicist or pharmacist than a White or Asian youngster. A vision wherein all groups work together to make California the best possible place to live. A vision, in short, of a state that develops, rather than squanders, its precious human resources.

The attainment of that vision depends on schools—schools that are excellent not in a narrow sense, but in the broadest and richest sense of the word. We believe that an excellent school is one in which all students are prepared for full participation in our society—a place in which students are encouraged and given the resources to develop their skills and talents to the very limits of their capacities. While the correspondence between race, income and achievement may not be fully erased, an excellent school will purposefully and systematically challenge that relationship at every juncture.

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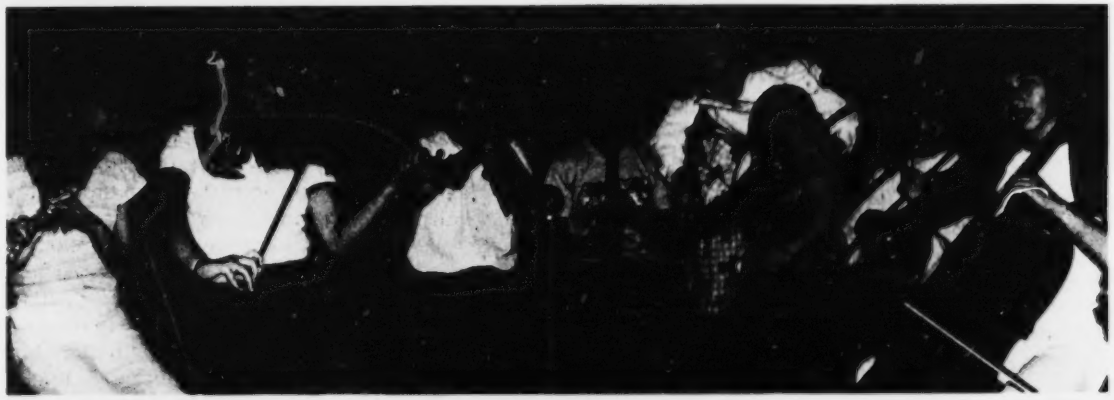

PART ONE
The Changing Character of California: Demographic Imperatives for Educational Change

Early reports portray Californians as a relatively homogeneous group. Overwhelmingly White, well-educated, and relatively affluent by national standards, residents of the Golden State occupied a favored position in the national imagery.

These portraits were not, of course, ever completely accurate. But they are even less accurate today than ever before. Ethnic minorities—Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and American Indians—now comprise more than one-third of the state's population. Of approximately 23.7 million Californians in 1980, 4.5 million are Hispanic, 1.8 million are Black, and 1.3 million are Asian.

During the coming decades, minority representation in the state will continue to grow. If we use conservative estimates of fertility and immigration, the Black population is expected to maintain its 7.6% share through the year 2000, Hispanics are projected to move from 19.2% to 24% of the population and Asians will increase their share from 6.7% to 9.8%, becoming the second largest ethnic group in the state. Utilizing higher growth assumptions, by the year 2000 the total minority population will be 45%. Even if the growth of the minority population slows, California will be "majority-minority" by the year 2010.

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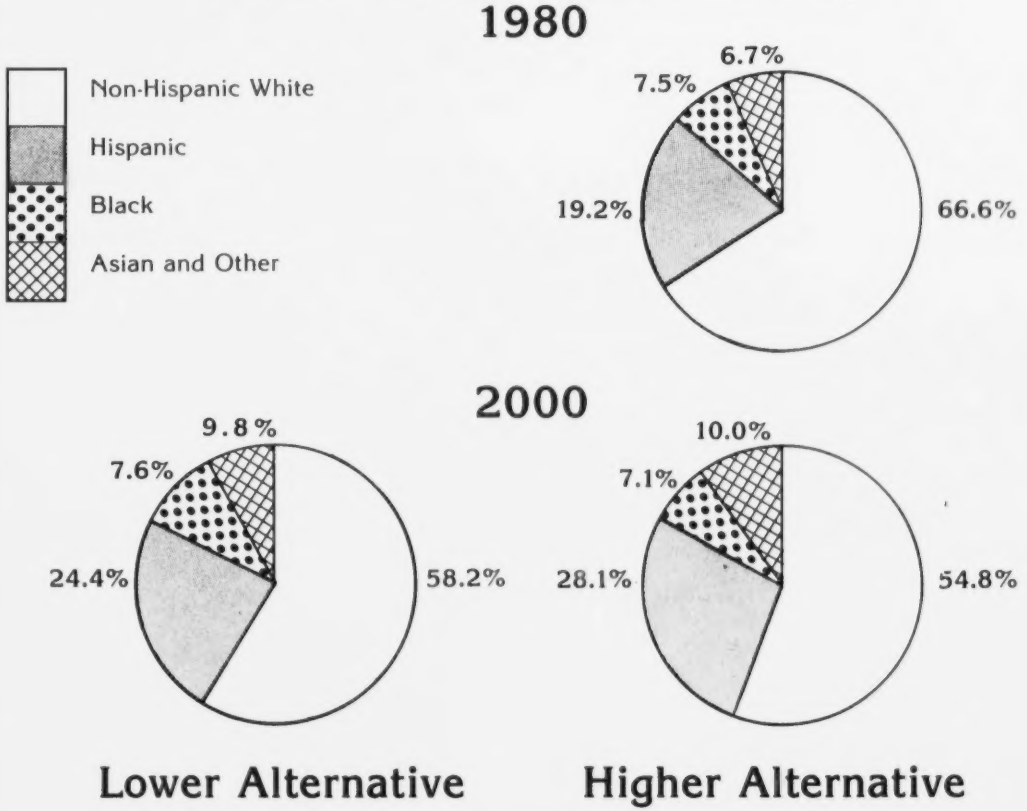
A disproportionate number of minorities are poor. In 1979, 20% of Black families and

FIGURE 1 Population Projections for California



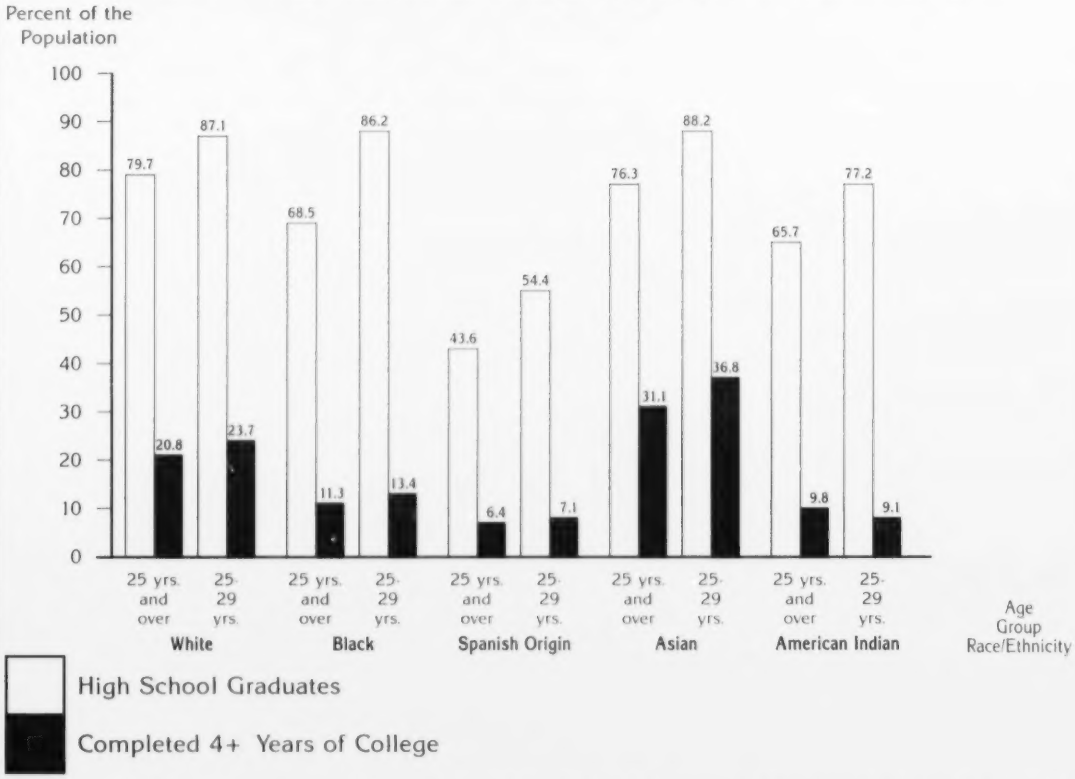
SOURCE *Projections of the Hispanic Population for California, 1985-2000 with Projections of Non-Hispanic White, Black, and Asian and Other Population Groups.* Palo Alto, California: Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1982, Table 9, page 23.

16.8% of Hispanic families in California had incomes below the nationally established poverty level ($7,412 for a family of four), compared to 5.5% of White families. Children in these families constituted 18% and 42.7% respectively of the children in California living in families with incomes below the poverty level. But large absolute numbers of Whites are poor as well. Although only 5.5% of the White families in California had incomes below the poverty line in 1979, the children in these families constituted one-third of the children in California living in poverty. Of almost 1 million children under 18 living in poverty in California, approximately 300,000 are White, 170,000 are Black, and 400,000 are Hispanic. Neither the size nor distribution of the poor population is expected to change dramatically in the near future.

INCREASED DIVERSITY IN THE SCHOOLS

The overall change in group proportions is most dramatic in the younger, school-age population. Of the approximately 4 million students now attending California's public schools, more than 44% are ethnic minorities. In 1981, the most recent year for which ethnic data are available, 26% of K-12 enrollments were Hispanic and another 10% were Black. Asian students comprised 5.5% of the total, and American Indians another .8%. Minority representation is higher in the lower grade levels. Kindergarten and first grade enrollments, for example, were over 50% minority in 1981. By comparison, ethnic minorities comprised only 33.9% of the total at the 12th grade level.

FIGURE 2 High School and College Completion for California: 1980



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *General Social and Economic Characteristics of the Population, California, 1980.* U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1983, Table 76.

and

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Detailed Population Characteristics, California, 1980.* U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.: 1983, Table 204.

DECLINING YOUTH POPULATION

While these dramatic changes occur in the composition of the youth population, that population is shrinking. Nationally, elementary and secondary school enrollment declined by 14% between 1970 and 1983. High school enrollments will continue to decrease until 1992, when they are expected to be more than 20% below the 1976 level.

The declines in California, while not as large as those in the frost belt states, have also been significant. Since 1975, the number of high school graduates has slipped each year. That year the state's public schools produced approximately 294,000 graduates; in 1982, they produced only 241,000. The number of graduates is expected to decrease for the rest of the decade.

WHAT DO THESE PROJECTIONS MEAN FOR CALIFORNIA?

The young and growing ethnic population is the workforce of tomorrow. If current patterns of educational attainment are not changed, minority groups will not be able to make their full contribution to California society or to the California economy. If current patterns continue, what can we expect?

The young and growing ethnic population is the workforce of tomorrow.

First, unless current patterns of educational attainment are altered, we can expect that—for the first time in American history—young workers will, on the average, be less well-educated than those who preceded them into the workforce. In spite of considerable progress during the past two decades, educational attainment among ethnic minorities continues to be lower than among Whites.

Second, unless current patterns of school achievement are altered, fewer students will graduate from high school and enter four year colleges and universities. Black and Chicano high school graduates are less than one-third as likely as their White counterparts to satisfy admissions requirements for the University of California and less than one-half as likely to meet admissions requirements for the California State University system.

Third, for those concerned about technically-trained workers, these two trends are doubly threatening. For not only is the general supply of college-educated workers likely to decrease, it seems probable—unless current patterns are altered—that the supply will be especially short in technical and scientific fields. At four-year colleges, Black and Chicano undergraduates have been considerably less likely than other students to major in business, engineering, physical science, or computer and information science; this problem is even more pronounced at the graduate level.

Finally, there is the matter of support for the aging population. Due to the increasing size of the over-65 group, the Social Security burden on young workers is likely to become substantial. The over-65 population is predominantly White, while the young workers are increasingly minority. If these young workers are not well-employed, the burden may become intolerable and the potential for conflict will increase.

The key, of course, to all of these problems is found in the words *"unless current achievement patterns are altered."* Part Two of this report will describe achievement patterns for poor and minority students in more detail; subsequent parts will discuss how these patterns might be changed.

PART TWO
The Journey through School

Educators often refer to the educational system as a pipeline—a pipeline to interesting opportunities, to good jobs, to the good life. Those interested in minority education are especially prone to view education in these terms and to focus their energies on "leaks" in that pipeline. Though it was tempting to borrow this metaphor for our description of California's educational process—especially when we heard one prominent Chicana say of that pipeline: "It's not leaking, it's hemorrhaging"—we have chosen not to do so. That choice was made because, as we looked at the data and thought about the process of schooling, we became convinced that what we had before us was far more complex than a leaking—even hemorrhaging—pipeline. The California educational system is in no sense a single pipeline from which certain students disappear. Rather, it is a complicated web of channels that operate to sort and classify students from kindergarten on, separating them both from one another and, in effect, from access to a common base of knowledge.

In our view, children are not well served by this channeling process at either the elementary or early secondary level. These early grouping decisions—decisions normally made on only the scantiest of impressions—often serve to shape the opportunities available to a student for the remainder of his or her academic career. As John Goodlad points out in his recent study of schooling, when a first-grade class is divided into four ability-based reading groups, those groups will usually be four grade levels apart within three or four years. A few short years later, those groups become tracks, which channel students into—or out of—high quality postsecondary opportunities.

Although some poor and minority students survive this process, many more do not. For these students are more likely, because of parental educational levels, to arrive at elementary school with lesser skills and, consequently, to be placed in lower "ability" groups. Small initial differences thus become larger differences over time.

The California educational system . . . is a complicated web of channels that operate to sort and classify students from kindergarten on, separating them both from one another and, in effect, from access to a common base of knowledge.

For poor and minority students, the effects of these initial placements are compounded at each of the later branching points in our educational system. Thus, as early as the junior high level, we not only see achievement disparities resulting from the elementary-level grouping process, but we also begin to see effects from the winnowing process that goes on in the higher tracks. So, as the student cohort moves from Math to Pre-Algebra to Algebra I, there are disproportionate decreases among minority students, even when performance in the prerequisite class is held constant.

At the high school level, our educational system is, to most students, a bewildering set of branching points. Each year, those interested in attending college must actively opt into the higher curriculum—or fall back into the general program, where instruction is generally of lesser quality and where curricular objectives are ill-defined. Similarly, those interested simply in finishing high school must see that they complete specified courses—or start down the path toward dropping out. Students whose parents or advisors cannot help them through this maze—disproportionate numbers of poor and minority students among them—are less likely to exercise the higher option. Unfortunately, schools rarely seek to influence their decisions in the direction of that higher option, so the achievement gap widens.

As if these effects weren't enough, there is considerable evidence that our system denies minority youngsters an education of the same quality as that provided to other youngsters. When predominantly minority schools are compared to predominantly White schools, certain systematic differences begin to appear. By virtually every measure of quality, predominantly minority schools are the losers: teacher quality, staffing ratios, college prep classes, overcrowding, and instructional materials. Even vocational education programs in areas with high concentrations of minority youth are more likely to lead to low-paying jobs than programs in other areas. These differences suggest that there is some truth to what many have suspected all along: the education provided to minority youngsters in California is, in fact, inferior to that provided to other youngsters.

A. WHO TAKES THE JOURNEY

The student population of California schools is considerably more diverse than that of most states. According to 1981-82 data from the State Department of Education, California's public schools are 56.4% White and 43.4% minority. Minority students are divided into five categories: Black (9.9%), Hispanic (25.8%), Filipino (1.6%), Asian or Pacific Islander (5.5%), and American Indian or Alaskan Native (.8%).

In describing the journey through school, we will discuss the effects of the schooling process on Black, Hispanic and poor students.

These are the groups that experience the most difficulty on the journey through school and for which data is most readily available, although American Indians and some immigrant Asian groups also do less well in school than Whites.

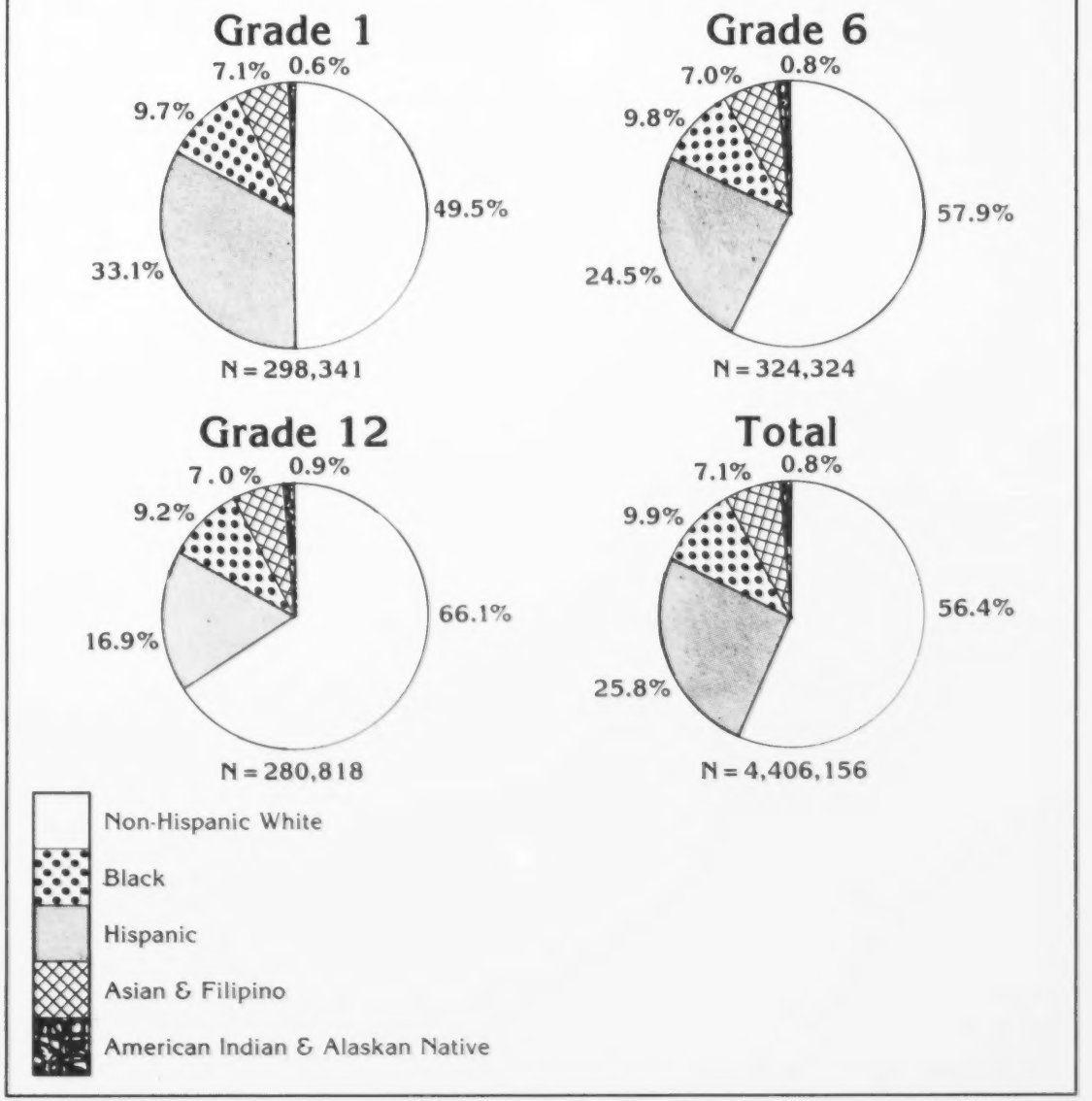
Within these classificatons, especially among Asians and Hispanics, there is considerable diversity. A substantial proportion of both populations is composed of students whose parents, grandparents and other forebears are American. But, there are also many more recent immigrants from Vietnam, Cambodia, Taiwan, Thailand, and from Mexico, Central and South America. These new Americans bring with them different cultures, dialects, and learning experiences, and pose special challenges for our educational system.

Recent language surveys reveal one aspect of this challenge. Because of the influx of new immigrants to California and a more extensive attempt to identify students with limited English proficiency (LEP), the number of students in California schools so identified almost doubled between 1977 and 1983. Students identified as having primary languages other than English and as limited English speaking comprised 11.3% of the school population in 1983. Another 11.3% of K-12 enrollments were identified as having primary languages other than English, but were not certified LEP. Together, these students speak some 41 different languages, although 89% of them speak one of five languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Tagalog, or Korean.

Concentration of Minority Students

In general, minority students take the journey through school together. Despite efforts to integrate the schools, most minority students still attend majority-minority schools. Minority students are concentrated in relatively few districts and within specific schools in those districts. Between 1968 and 1978, racial isolation of minority schools actually increased.

FIGURE 3 Enrollment in California Public Schools: 1981-1982



In many California counties and school districts, minority students constitute a majority of the student population, in some cases by a sizeable margin. By and large, Black student enrollment is concentrated in the large urban areas of the state: the Bay Area counties, the Los Angeles-San Diego metroplex, Fresno and Sacramento. Eighty-three percent of the Black students in California are found in just 8 counties. Chicano enrollment is concentrated in the large urban areas, and in the agricultural counties of central California. Some 81% of Chicano students attend school in only 8 California counties.

Between 1968 and 1978, racial isolation of minority schools actually increased

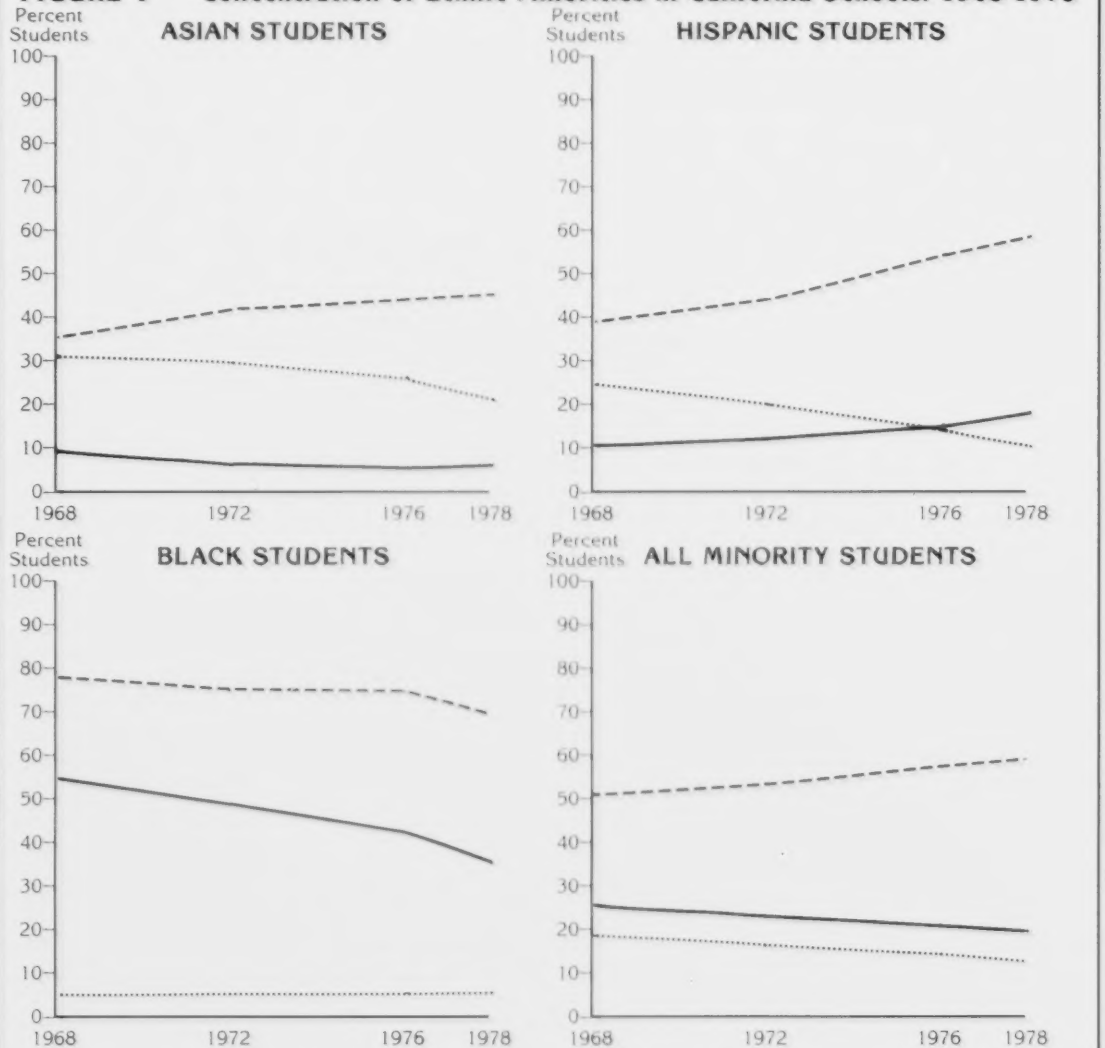
Within each of these counties, the minority student populations are concentrated in certain school districts. In Los Angeles County, for example, only 36 of the 71 school districts have substantial proportions of minority students—even though the county-wide enrollment is more than 56% Black and Hispanic. Similarly, in Alameda County, Blacks are concentrated in 6 of the 20 school districts; in Orange County, Hispanics are concentrated in only 6 of the 31 districts.

In the state as a whole, approximately 39% of the elementary schools and 18% of the high schools are majority-minority.

School Quality

Minorities not only take the journey through school together, they tend to do so in low quality schools. Although it is difficult to obtain comprehensive data on the quality of minority schools, available evidence suggests that minority schools have fewer resources, are staffed by teachers with less education and experience, and are not maintained as well as other schools. Inevitably, this uneven distribution of educational resources influences the journey

FIGURE 4 Concentration of Ethnic Minorities in California Schools: 1968-1978



SOURCE: Killalea Associates, Inc., Alexandria, VA; May, 1980.

TABLE 1 Predominantly Minority Schools in California: 1981-1982

Type of School	Total	Total with Minority Concentration	≥50% Black	≥50% Hispanic	≥50% Black & Hispanic*
Elementary	4702	1834 (39%)	249 (5.3%)	635 (18.4%)	720 (15.3%)
Secondary	827	148 (18%)	31 (3.7%)	66 (8%)	51 (6.2%)

*Does not include schools in other reported categories.

SOURCE: Consolidated Programs Data Base, California State Department of Education, Special Compilation for the Achievement Council.

through school for minorities and other low-income students.

School Conditions: On site visits to low-performance minority schools, staff members from the Assembly Office of Research documented cases of severe overcrowding, including too little room in the cafeteria for everyone to eat sitting down, and too few working toilets. Some of the schools were covered with graffiti, and had windows that remained broken for months. One school had burned-out buildings; another had rat holes in classrooms. While it is by no means true that every minority school in California offers quite such a wretched environment, there are far too many instances like this—where schools are overcrowded and less well maintained than White schools in the same district—to ignore. That even one such school should remain is, to us, unacceptable.

Expenditures: A recent study of the Los Angeles School District revealed large expenditure differences between predominantly White schools and predominantly minority schools. Schools in a predominantly White administrative area spent $500 per student more (general expenditures) than schools in two predominantly Chicano administrative areas. Expenditures in the White schools were $300 per student larger than those in a predominantly Black area. Unfortunately, no similar data are available for other school districts in California; but we do not consider the Los Angeles disparities atypical.

Teacher Quality: There is considerable anecdotal evidence that low-income and minority schools have high teacher vacancy rates and are often assigned teachers of a lower quality than other schools. Although state educational data systems contain some information on this subject, much is not in a format that allows for comparisons of teachers in different types of schools. However, a special analysis conducted for The Achievement Council by staff in the Department of Education did show significant differences between minority and other schools in the proportion of inexperienced teachers; minority schools had far more teachers with fewer than five years of experience.

Curriculum: In general, schools serving poor and minority communities tend to offer fewer academic courses, especially in advanced areas, than other schools. In a recent survey on the high school curriculum, the California Postsecondary Education Commission found that 17% of the schools responding have difficulty offering the classes required by the University of California for admission. The schools and districts unable to provide these classes tend to offer 5 or fewer class periods; schools serving Hispanic students also report difficulty at above-average rates. Most problems are in the area of math, science, and foreign language.

These and other differences in quality systematically affect the journey through school for minority students. At every level of the educational process, minority students are less likely to have access to high-quality resources—including teachers, books, and physical facilities—than other students.

B. THE JOURNEY BEGINS: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

For most minority and low-income students, however, elementary schools—improved or not—are but the starting point in a long process of educational erosion that will, over the course of 12 to 13 years, gradually wash them out of the mainstream of American education and of American life. The process of erosion looks something like this: students from different backgrounds begin school with different experiences and skills which are reflected in tests of learning and ability at the outset of schooling. The standard procedure in most elementary schools is to begin right away grouping students in reading and math according to their demonstrated skills.

Most educators argue that "ability" grouping is an essential part of effective teaching, and that, if done correctly, grouping will not harm poor or minority students. "Done correctly," they say, "grouping is a flexible process which, through constant assessment and prescription, facilitates student progress at all levels." Such

an idealized system is, however, dependent on a fully articulated curriculum, so that the skills required for each group at each level are known —and on the availability of fair and sensitive assessment devices. Such a system will group students differently in each subject and will allow for frequent movement of students between groups. Extra help will be provided as a matter of course to those in the lower groups to enable them to catch up with the higher groups.

For most minority and low-income students . . . elementary schools . . . are but the starting point in a long process of educational erosion that will, over the course of the next 12 to 13 years, gradually wash them out of the mainstream of American education and of American life.

While this kind of grouping may be possible, it is not common. Instead, students who have not been exposed to books in early childhood, whose parents do not speak fluent or standard English, or who have not yet learned their letters and numbers are grouped together. This grouping is justified as ability grouping, but ability as it is measured for these purposes depends as much on previous learning as it does on innate intellectual ability. Once in these groups, the lower achievers are taught a smaller quantity of material—and at a slower pace. The evidence suggests, furthermore, that students stay in their groups. Consequently, what began as a disadvantage becomes an achievement gap. And that gap widens as students progress through school.

The Achievement Gap: Elementary Schools and Students

Statewide scores for elementary schools on the California Assessment Program (CAP) Survey of Basic Skills have improved steadily over the past decade in reading, written language and math. Third and sixth graders in California schools now perform at or slightly below the national mean. But these averages obscure a wide range in performance among California elementary schools. Because CAP scores are not available for individual students and cannot be disaggregated by race, we examined scores for elementary schools with high percentages of Black, Hispanic, or poor students and found them at the bottom of the achievement distribution. The average percentile rank for elementary schools with enrollments over 50% Black or 70% Hispanic is below 20 for all but one of the 1983 CAP tests for grades 3 and 6. Schools with a combined majority of Blacks and Hispanics (but with a majority of neither) perform somewhat better but still average in the bottom third of California elementary schools.

TABLE 2 Percentile Ranks of Predominantly Minority Schools on the California Assessment Program, Grades 3 and 6: 1981-1982.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT			
	≥50% Black	≥70% Hispanic	≥50% Black + Hispanic*
GRADE 3	N = 252	N = 423	N = 720
Reading	17.0	16.6	29.5
Language	19.4	16.4	20.0
Math	16.0	21.5	32.3
GRADE 6			
Reading	13.7	15.4	26.9
Language	16.4	17.3	27.2
Math	13.3	18.6	29.3

*Schools in Column 1 and Column 2 are deleted from this group.

SOURCE: Consolidated Programs Data Base, California State Department of Education: Sacramento, CA. Special Analysis for The Achievement Council.

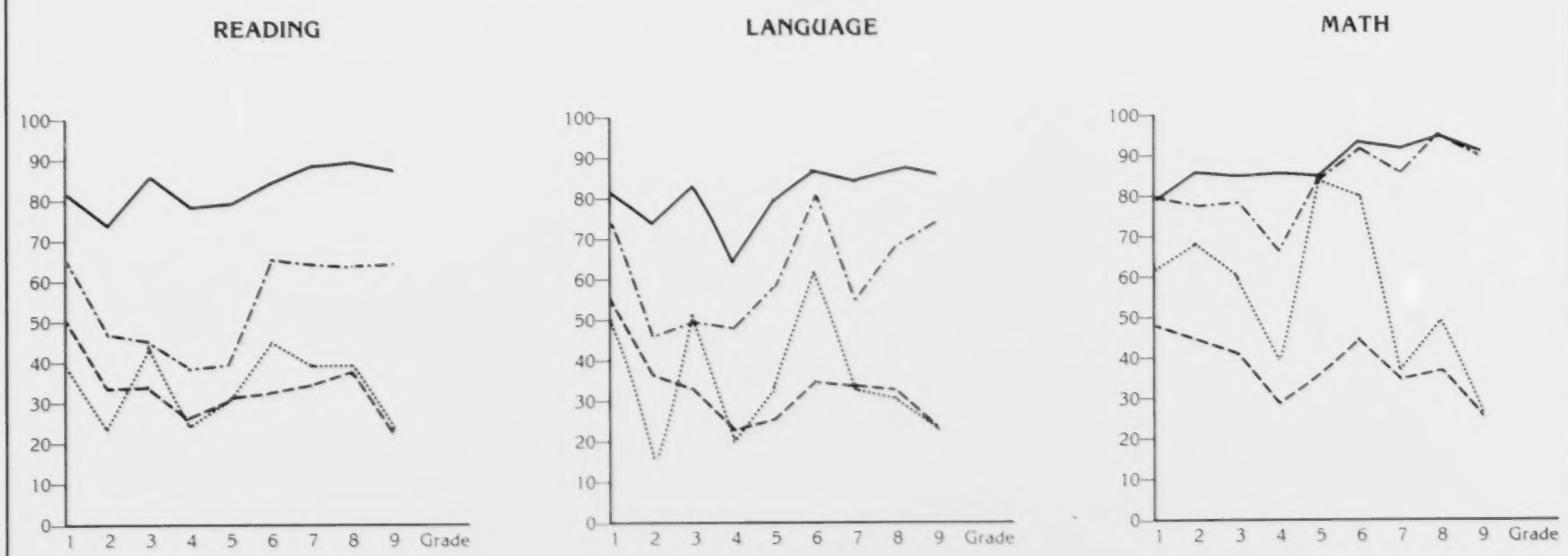
Our review of individual achievement data from several large school districts substantiates these differences. In the Pasadena Unified School District the gap between minority and White achievement is narrowing but is still substantial. The Berkeley and San Diego Unified School Districts report a similar pattern.

The Achievement Gap Widens

As students progress through elementary school, the gap between Whites and minorities widens considerably. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the gap widens in both reading and math from an average difference of 10 points for Black and White 9-year-olds to a gap of over 40 points in Math and over 50 points in reading for 13-year-olds.

The widening achievement gap between White and minority students is also clear in the results of the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) from several California school districts. Data from Berkeley, Pasadena, and San Diego—all school districts that are making efforts to improve minority achievement—reveal the extent of the problem. This widening of the achievement gap is typical of most school systems. As students progress through school, minority students fall further and further behind.

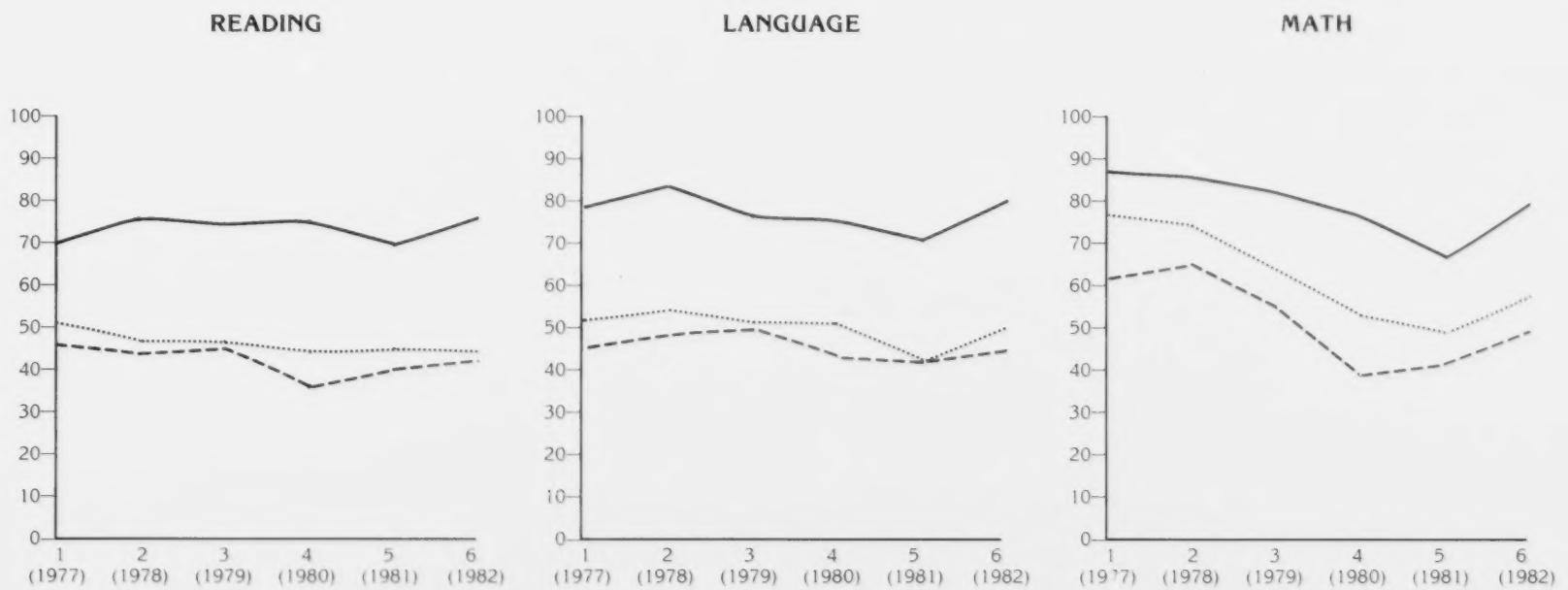
FIGURE 5 Achievement Test Scores By Grade Level in Berkeley Schools*



*Mean Scores on The California Test of Basic Skills in 1983.

SOURCE: "The School Test Scores," *The Berkeley Gazette*, Tuesday, December 13, 1983, page 1, column 1.

FIGURE 6 The 1977 1st Grade Class in Pasadena: The Gap Widens as Students Progress through School*



*Mean Scores on The California Test of Basic Skills.

SOURCE: Department of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. *A summary of the 1982-1983 test results*, prepared by William A. Bibbiani, Pasadena Unified School District: Pasadena, CA., November, 1983.

C. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL: THE WAY STATION

Junior high school is the forgotten piece of the educational puzzle. The mission of the junior high is not clear. It is a place of transition; students leave the self-contained classroom and enter the maze of changing classes and different teachers for every subject.

In many ways middle school is the appropriate title for these schools: they are a way station between the two main events of public schooling. Yet this is a critical time for students. It is during junior high school that students begin to make self-evaluations that lead to school and job choices. It is here that students who have failed in school turn their attention to the streets and to enterprises they find more rewarding. In junior high, students become aware of those elements of their lives that distinguish them from others—alcoholic parents, broken homes, different opportunities and parental expectations. Poor or rich, dark or light: all students begin to make those critical choices about themselves that can lead to success or failure, to dropping out or to pushing ahead.

Junior high school is the forgotten piece of the educational puzzle. Yet there is an important opportunity here to influence crucial decisions regarding staying in school and preparing for postsecondary opportunities.

As students progress from elementary into secondary education they follow different trails that lead to very different life options. At the end of elementary school and throughout junior high school, students are sorted into different classes that reflect their past achievement and the expectations the schools have for their future performance. Those that stayed in the bottom group in elementary school are kept in a low-level track that, at best, provides remedial work and, at worst, repeats the pattern of failure begun during elementary school. By contrast, high-achieving students are pushed ahead and encouraged to take more difficult English and math classes that prepare them for college preparatory classes in senior high school. Unfortunately, the State of California has only just begun to assess the academic performance of students in junior high school. Data available from the CTBS demonstrate, however, that the achievement gap continues to widen in junior high, as White students move forward and minorities lag further and further behind.

Despite the critical role of junior high, little attention is focussed here. There is no teaching certificate designated specifically for junior high. Curriculum developers tend to leap from elementary to senior high. The few references to junior high in policy or the literature usually address the social problems of early adolescence, but ignore the educational significance of this period. Yet there is an important opportunity here to influence crucial decisions regarding staying in school and preparing for postsecondary opportunities.

D. SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL: THE PATHS PROLIFERATE

When students with now quite diverse learning experiences, achievement levels, and life expectations reach senior high school they face several paths—some to be chosen for them, others chosen by them. One of those paths leads right out the school door: although the law requires that students stay in school until age 16, for many students the process of dropping out begins at 15, 14, or even 13. The remaining paths run through distinctly different sections of the high school curriculum and lead to vastly different postsecondary opportunities. The effect of these paths is to further widen the gap between the poor, minorities, and middle class Whites.

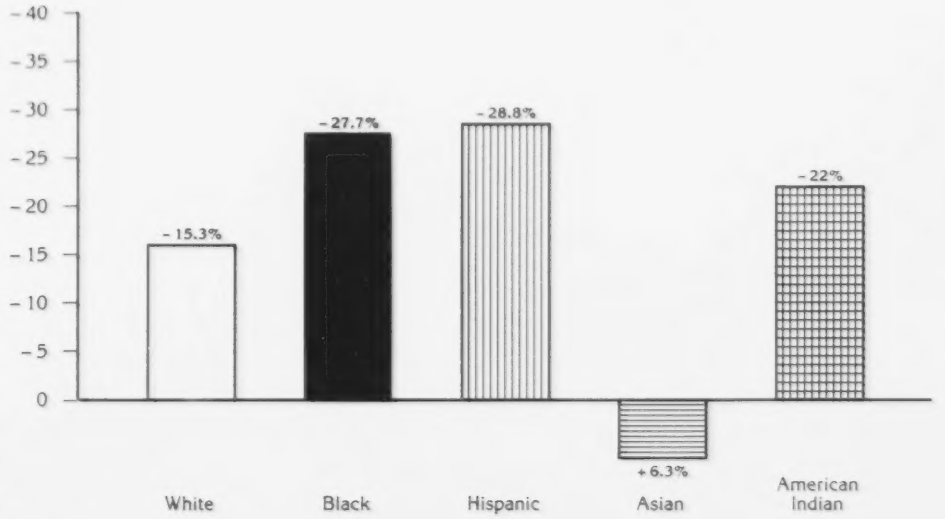
Dropping Out

If schools are to provide a quality education for all students, their first task is to keep students in school. Available evidence suggests, however, that retention is an increasingly difficult problem. After a period of steady declines during the sixties and seventies, drop-out rates have begun to increase again. Hispanic students are especially prone to leave school before graduation.

If schools are to provide a quality education for all students, their first task is to keep students in school.

Unfortunately, there are no precise data on school completion rates for either the nation or for California. Schools simply have no way of keeping track of their students to know whether students transfer or quit. Examining the retention rates from one grade to the next level is, however, one way of detecting drop-outs. Data for California indicate that attrition between the 9th to 12th grades is now above 20 percent, with drop-out rates for both Blacks and Chicanos higher than the average.

FIGURE 7 California High School Attrition
A Comparison of Tenth Graders (1979) and Twelfth Graders (1981)



SOURCE: Office of the Provost and Vice-President, *Ethnic Data and Higher Education.* California State University: Long Beach, CA, May, 1983.

But there is further attrition in the 12th grade. According to data available from the California Department of Education, not only is the number of students who graduate substantially below the number of students enrolled in grade 12 for a given year, that number is increasing. The percent of seniors who did not graduate climbed to over 10% in 1980 and by 1982 reached 14%. When this last figure is added to the percent of students who had dropped out before 12th grade, the total is staggering: approximately 34% of the students enrolled in the 9th grade in California public schools in 1979 did not complete high school in 1982-83.

Judging from census reports, the cumulative effect of this attrition process is considerably different for Hispanics than for all other students. In the 20 to 24-year-old population, 84% of the Whites and 82% of the Blacks were high school graduates; however, only 55% of the Hispanics had completed high school.

Curricular Tracking

Those who stay in high school are ordinarily grouped into one of three tracks: college preparatory, vocational education, or general education. In some schools this tracking is done quite explicitly; in others more subtly and slowly. But in few schools is the general or core curriculum strong enough to overcome the impetus toward separation.

By the time students are in the 9th or 10th grade, it is virtually impossible to change tracks and head in a different direction.

Ideally these tracks are equal, but in this, as in other areas of education, separate is inherently unequal. Students in the general and vocational tracks are taught less, learn less, and are provided with fewer opportunities to develop their talents than the college-bound students.

By the time students are in the 9th or 10th grade, it is virtually impossible to change tracks and head in a different direction. Although placement into these tracks is done in a variety of ways, the groups are remarkably homogeneous. Disproportionate numbers of Blacks, Chicanos, and poor students end up in the general and vocational tracks, even when their levels of achievement are taken into account. Disproportionate numbers of White and high income students end up in the college track, both because of and in spite of their achievement levels.

Both nationally and in California, minority and poor students report taking more remedial and fewer advanced academic courses then middle income White students. In the national High School and Beyond study the gaps between Whites, Blacks and Hispanics are significant in almost every category, as are differences between low- and high-income students. These differences are characteristic of the college-bound population as well. Of those students taking the SAT, Blacks and Mexican-Americans report completing fewer advanced courses than their White counterparts.

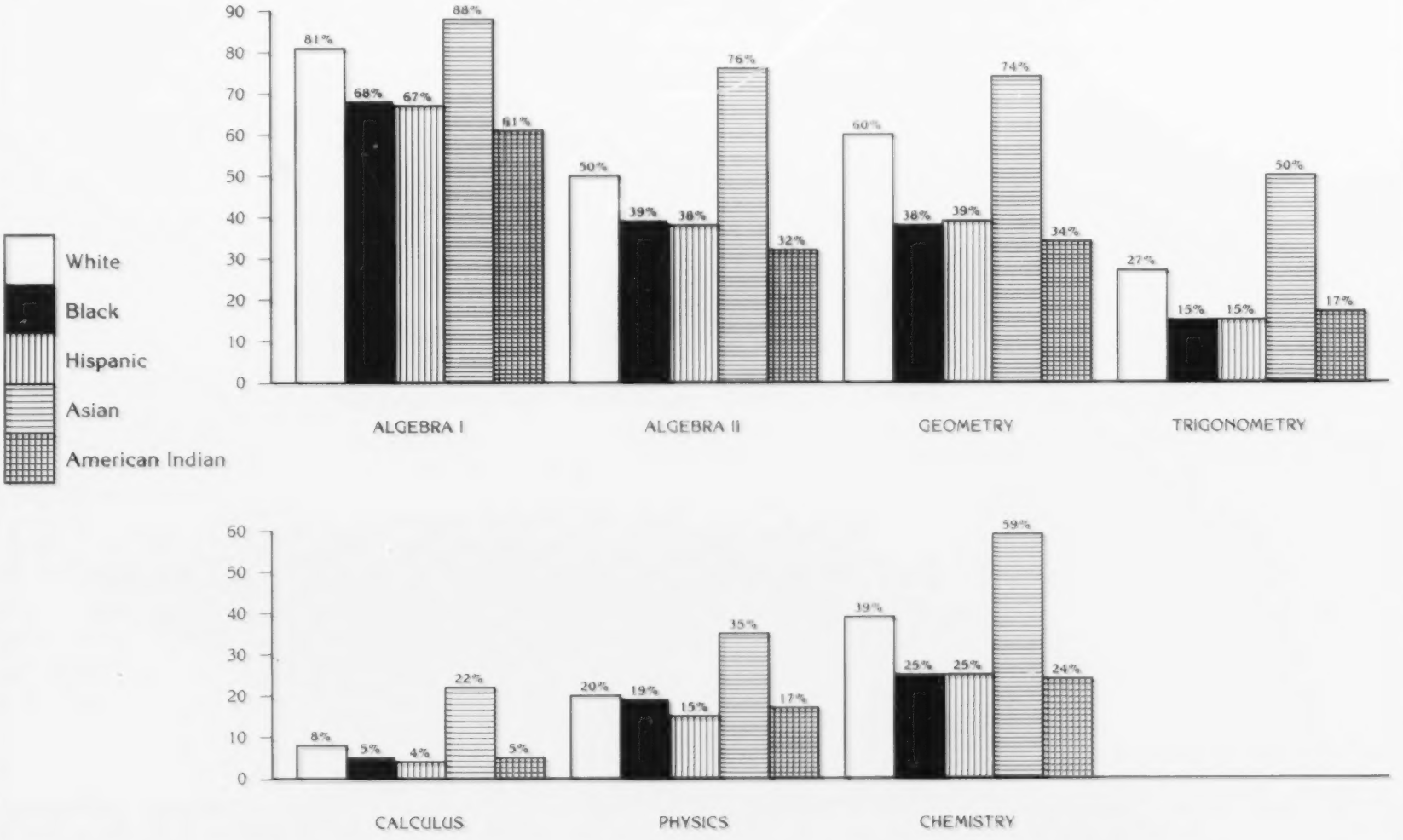
TABLE 3 Enrollment in California Vocational Education Classes: 1982-83

BLACKS AND HISPANICS AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT

	Black Enrollment	Hispanic Enrollment
Comprehensive High School Programs	19.8%	11.7%
Regional Occupation Centers	19.1%	12.6%
Total High School Student Population, 1981-82	9.7%	18.05%

SOURCE: California State Department of Education: Sacramento, 1984. Unpublished data.

FIGURE 8 High School Seniors Completing Math and Science Courses in the United States: 1980



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *High School and Beyond . . . A Capsule Description of High School Students*, 1981.

High School Achievement

The level of performance among high school seniors has remained stable or declined in most subject areas during the 1970s. The performance of minorities has improved in some cases; in others, the declines among minorities have been smaller than those among Whites. Consequently, the achievement gap has narrowed slightly, but it certainly has not closed.

The National Asseessment of Educational Progress reports that over the course of the 70s skill levels among American youth went down slightly. In reading, this downward trend was met by a slight upward trend in the scores of Black students, the gap between Blacks and Whites slipping from 19.5 points in 1971 to 18.5 points in 1980. Performance on the math tests decreased by 3.6% for all seventeen year olds between 1973 and 1978: both minorities and Whites shared in this drop, but the drop for Blacks and Chicanos was less than for Whites. However, as in reading, a substantial gap remains.

This decline in scores at the national level is also evident in the California Assessment Program's Survey of Basic Skills, which is administered annually in the 12th grade. Between 1975 and 1980, median scores declined in both reading and mathematics. However, contrary to national trends, the drop for reading was greater than the drop for math. In 1980-81, the median score rose in both reading and math and has held relatively steady ever since.

These average scores conceal variations of performance by students with different backgrounds and schools with different student populations. Twelfth grade students taking the Survey of Basic Skills are asked to state the highest educational level attained by their parents. Average student scores on this test decrease as the educational level of parents decreases. The biggest gaps occur at the lower levels of parental education: there is a difference of over 5 points in the scores of students whose parents have not graduated from high school and those whose parents have, and in the scores of students whose parents are high school graduates and children whose parents attended college.

There are also significant differences between schools with concentrations of minorities and other schools. Approximately 18% of California's high schools have student enrollments greater than 50% Black or Chicano. The average percentile rank for these schools on the CAP tests is well below the state mean. For high schools that are 50% Black, the average 1982-83 percentile rank on the 12th grade CAP tests ranged between 9.8 and 10. The average percentile ranks for high schools with at least 50% Chicanos were somewhat higher, ranging between 15.5 and 17.7. The average rank for schools with at least 50% Black and Chicano students but without a majority of either ranged between 16.6 and 22.5 for the three CAP tests. When compared on the basis of these tests, the vast majority of minority schools fall in the bottom quartile of California high schools.

For high schools that are 50% Black, the average 1982-83 percentile rank on the 12th grade CAP tests ranged between 9.8 and 10.

In districts that report individual achievement test scores by race and ethnicity for high school students, group differences are clearly evident. For example, in the Pasadena Unified School District the median score for Whites was 69% on the CTBS reading test, 70% on the language test, and 62% on the math test. Whites outscored Blacks by 41 points, 35 points, and 24 points. Chicanos fared somewhat better than Blacks in reading and math, but not in language.

TABLE 4 Percentile Ranks of Predominantly Minority Schools on the California Assessment Program, Grade 12: 1981-1982.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

GRADE 12	≥50% Black	≥50% Hispanic	≥50% Black & Hispanic*
Reading	10.8	15.5	16.6
Language	10.3	17.7	20.2
Mathematics	9.8	16.9	22.5

*Schools in columns 1 and 2 are deleted from this group.

SOURCE: Consolidated Programs Data Base, California State Department of Education: Sacramento, CA., 1984. Special Analysis for The Achievement Council.

Graduation Requirements

Many students stay in school, but fail to meet the graduation requirements. These requirements are of two types, both established at the district level: course requirements and proficiency tests. In 1981-82, minority high school seniors were three times less likely to complete the course requirements for graduation than were other students. There were differences, too, among seniors who completed the course requirements for graduation: as of December, 1981, 17% of the White students in this category had failed one or more of the proficiency tests required by their districts for graduation, compared with 36% of Black seniors and 25% of Hispanics. Although many of these students eventually passed the tests and advanced, these initial failure rates suggest group differences in mastery of basic skills.

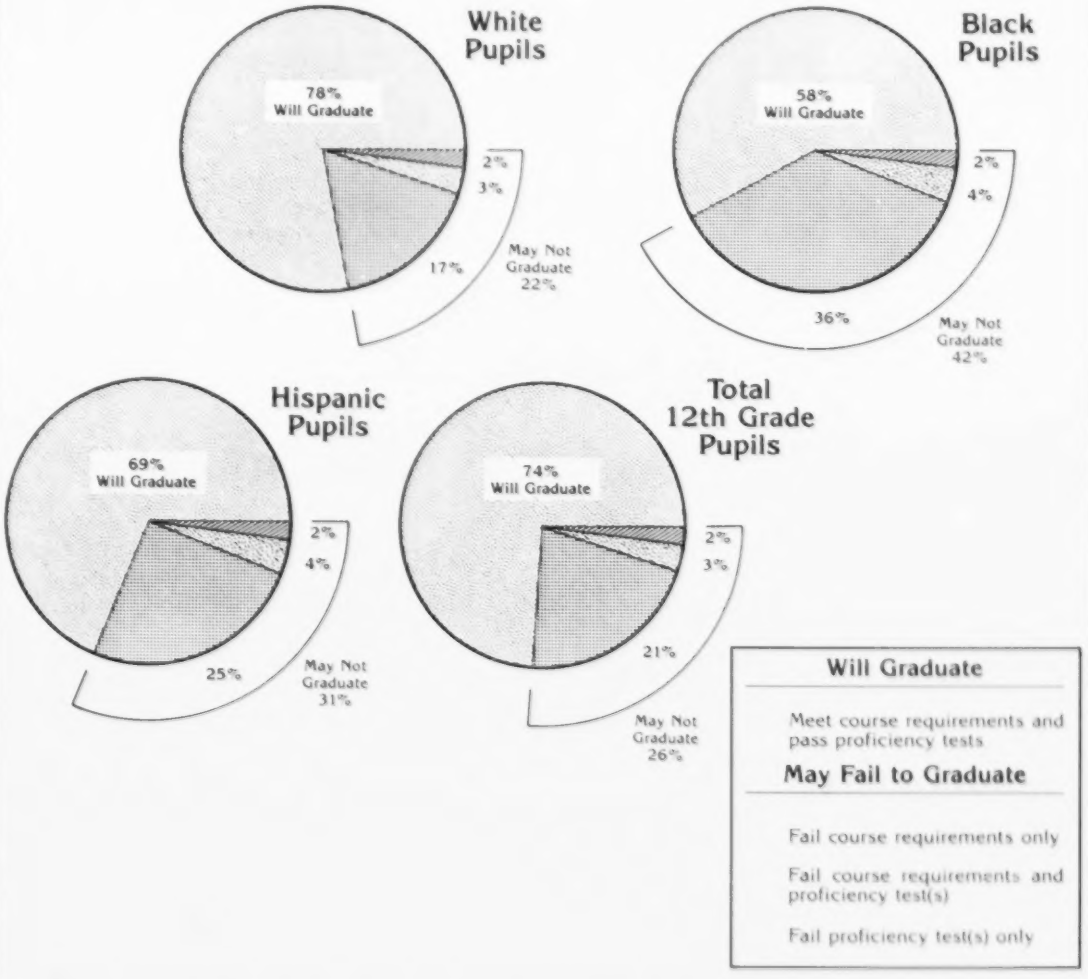
Continuing the Journey

When students finish high school they are not prepared for life in even vaguely similar ways. The high achievers take Advanced Placement tests and enter elite universities with partial course credits. Approximately 41% of California young people go on to college, but over 70% of these attend two-year institutions. Approximately 3% attend vocational or technical schools. The rest are thrust into the job market with varying degrees of skill.

The employment status, type of occupation, and income of adults is significantly affected by the level of education completed. Individuals who drop out of high school are more likely to be unemployed or to have a low-paying job with little opportunity for promotion. Completing high school, attending college, or completing college has a substantial effect on employment, on the type of job attained, and on salary.

Because ethnic minority students and low-income White students are more likely to drop out, they continue to be at the bottom of the job market throughout their lives. Black and

FIGURE 9 Potential Impact of Course Requirements and Proficiency Tests on 1982 High School Graduation Rates
(Based on Data as of December 1981)



SOURCE: *Statewide Summary of Student Performance on School District Proficiency Assessments*, California State Department of Education: Sacramento, 1982.

Chicano high school drop-outs are more likely to be unemployed than White drop-outs. For each year of education, the job status and income earned is less for minorities than Whites.

Transition to College

In California, the postsecondary options available to a high school graduate are a function of the high school record and scores on standardized college aptitude tests. Because poor and minority students generally take fewer academic courses and achieve lower grade averages, the postsecondary opportunities available to them are, on the average, more limited than those available to other students. This problem is compounded by the fact that Black and Chicano students perform considerably below other students on the major college aptitute test: the SAT.

A University of California study of the California high school graduating class of 1975 found that Black and Chicano graduates met UC eligibility requirements at less than one-third the rate of White graduates. Similarly, Blacks and Chicanos met admission requirements for the California State University system at approximately one-half the rate of White graduates.

Interestingly, the minority students who attained UC and CSU eligibility actually enrolled in college at rates equal to or higher than comparably qualified White students. The single exception was in CSU-eligible Chicanos, who entered CSU at a lower rate than other eligible students. These data illustrate the critical nature of high school performance in determining postsecondary paths.

Scholastic Aptitude Test — California students take the SAT at a much higher rate than students across the nation. Nationally approximately 32% of the graduating class takes the SAT, whereas 39-40% of California's graduating seniors take the test. However, despite substantial increases in the late seventies, the number and proportion of Blacks taking the SAT has dropped. The proportion of Blacks taking the test is approximately 1½ percentage points below the proportion of high school graduates who are Black; the proportion of Mexican-Americans among the test takers is only half that of graduates. Despite some gains among minority students during the last few years, there continues to be a large gap in SAT scores by race. In 1983, Whites had a composite score 135 points greater than that of Hispanics and 219 points greater than that of Blacks.

TABLE 5 SAT Scores for the Nation and the Western Region: 1983

RACIAL AND ETHNIC ENROLLMENT

	Verbal		Quantitative	
	Western	National	Western	National
Black	340	339	361	369
Hispanic	371	375	406	417
White	449	443	493	484
Asian	378	395	497	514
American Indian	383	388	417	425

NOTE: In 1983, 88% of the Black test-takers, 92% of the Hispanic test-takers and 62% of the White test-takers included in the Western Region are Californians.

SOURCE: *Profiles, College-Bound Seniors, 1983* edition. Admissions Testing Program of the College Board: New York, 1984.

In 1983, Whites had a composite SAT score 135 points greater than that of Hispanics and 219 points greater than that of Blacks.

SAT scores by race and ethnicity are not available for California; however, scores are reported for the Western Region. Although these data include students from several other states, the proportion of test-takers from California, especially for minorities, makes this a reasonable estimate of the performance of minorities in California on the SAT. Blacks and Hispanics in the Western Region score close to all Blacks and Hispanics on the verbal test but below them on the quantitative test. So, while the performance of the general test-taking population in California is equal to the average national performance, college-bound minorities do not appear to score as well as their counterparts nationally.

F. POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Californians have for many years taken considerable pride in the fact that college-going rates among the state's high school graduates are well above the national average. In 1980, approximately 42% of high school graduates across the country enrolled in an accredited college or university. According to the California Postsecondary Education Commission, the college-going rate for California graduates was nearly 50% higher: 61.8%

Although there is some uneveness in college-going rates for California graduates from different ethnic groups, available evidence suggests that intergroup differences are small and declining. Black high school graduates have made particular progress over the past two decades, more than doubling their rate of representation in postsecondary education and enrolling at a rate higher than that of White students at the present time. The Hispanic presence in postsecondary education has also increased dramatically, although Chicano graduates continue to enroll in college at rates somewhat below the statewide average. On the whole, minority graduates are almost as likely to enter college as White graduates—and are considerably more likely to attend college than high school graduates elsewhere in the country, regardless of race.

Some might conclude from this broad portrait that California's system of postsecondary education is working with comparable effectiveness for students from different ethnic and economic groups. But these general figures, though accurate, conceal large and systematic differences in the quality of postsecondary institutions attended, the rate of program/degree completion, and the type and level of programs selected. These differences combine to create a very different portrait of postsecondary equity in California: a portrait of limits, rather than opportunities; of inequality, rather than equality. In short, although constructed with the best of intentions, the branches in this segment of the educational system operate not to assist minority and poor young people to attain their ultimate educational goals but to divert them from those goals. And they do so in much the same fashion as the branches identified earlier in this report: by perpetuating—even enlarging—initial differences among entering students.

Student Distribution by Type of Institution

California's public postsecondary system is hierarchically organized, with the University of California on the top rung of the educational ladder, followed by the California State University and California Community Colleges. Admission to the University of California is restricted to graduates who rank in the top 12½% of their high school class; graduates in the upper third of their class may attend a campus of the California State University system. Anyone, including those over 18 who have not graduated from high school, can attend a community college; those who complete a specified number of academic units in good standing may then transfer to a four-year institution.

. . . the branches in this segment of the educational system operate not to assist minority and poor young people to attain their ultimate educational goals, but to divert them from those goals.

The community colleges were designed to provide a more flexible route of entry to the four-year institutions for late bloomers and others who do not perform particularly well in high school. As such, these institutions historically filled a critical role for many minority and low-income young people in California, providing them with a fresh academic start and an opportunity to master academic and vocational skills. Minority students continue to congregate in community colleges.

TABLE 6

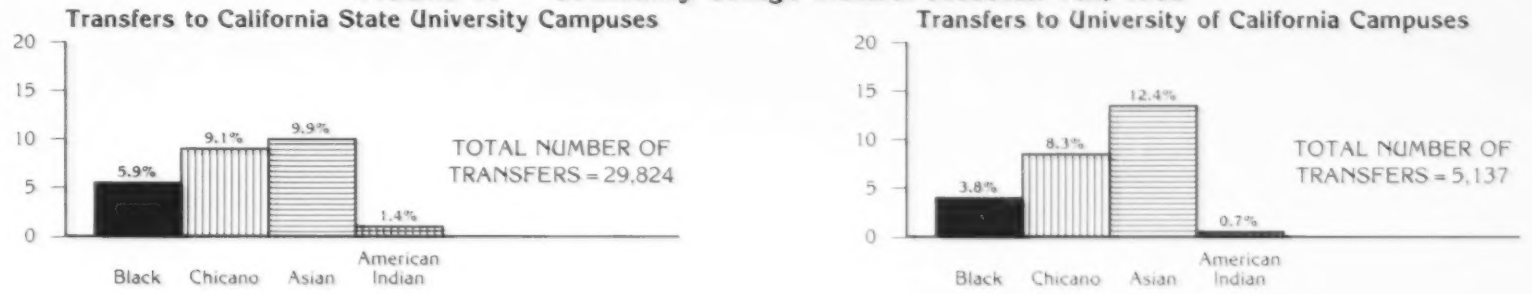
Undergraduate Minority Enrollment in California Colleges and Universities: Fall, 1982

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	American Indian
CCC (N = 1,087,552*)	8.2%	9.7%	12.5%	1.7%
CSU (N = 251,137)	11.2%	6.8%	9.5%	1.9%
UC (N = 100,751)	16.3%	4.0%	6.1%	0.5%

*Estimated.

SOURCE: California Postsecondary Education Commission, Unpublished data. Sacramento, CA, 1984.

FIGURE 10 Community College Transfer Students: Fall, 1982



SOURCE: California Postsecondary Education Commission; *Update of Community College Transfer Student Statistics, Fall, 1982:* Report 83-11, Sacramento, March, 1983.

Minority students are considerably less likely to transfer to a four-year school than other community college students.

If the community colleges were facilitating the transfer of large numbers of poor, minority and underprepared students to four-year institutions, Californians would have little cause to be concerned about either the disproportionately heavy concentration of ethnic minorities in the two-year schools or, more generally, the overall two-year/four-year enrollment pattern in California, where more than 70% of all college freshmen are enrolled in a two-year school, compared with only 33% of all students nationally. In fact, however, the number of transfers has never been large and has fallen off somewhat in recent years.

Minority students are considerably less likely to transfer to a four-year school than other community college students. In 1982, only 175 Blacks and 389 Chicanos transferred from a community college to the University of California; California State University enrolled a total of 1,539 Black transfers and 2,467 Chicano transfers.

Persistence

Evidence suggests that students who begin their postsecondary education in two-year institutions are only one-third as likely as similarly qualified students in four-year schools to obtain a bachelor's degree. But there are also important differences in program completion rates within the four-year sector. Among freshmen who entered California State University in 1973, for example, only 25% of the Chicano students and 20% of the Black students received a bachelor's degree by 1980; the degree acquisition rate for White students was 46%. By contrast, among 1972 University of California freshmen (regular admissions only), 43% of the Chicano students, 41% of Blacks, and 52% of Whites obtained a degree by 1977.

As a result of these differences, minority students obtain a smaller fraction of the degrees awarded each year than one would expect based on their presence in the student pupulation. In 1979-80, Black and Chicano students comprised 20.8% of community college enrollments, but obtained only 17.9% of the Associate Degrees awarded. In the California

State University, the enrollment/Bachelor's degree ratio was 16.5 to 12.2; in the University of California, the ratio was 9.5 to 7.8.

Distribution by Program

Over the past ten years, students in California's four-year institutions have shifted away from the social sciences and education toward "more potentially employable specialties." Students are now considerably more likely to select engineering, business, and computer science than in the past.

Like their White counterparts, Black and Chicano undergraduates are moving toward the more technical fields. But they have done so more slowly than other students. In general, Black and Chicano undergraduates are less likely than White students to study business, engineering and computer science; they are more likely to study social sciences and public affairs. Consequently, the pool of technically-trained manpower in California continues to be disproportionately White—and, unless future increases among minorities outstrip those of Whites, is likely to be so well into the future.

Graduate Education

In 1981, California's public postsecondary institutions enrolled nearly 108,000 graduate students. In graduate academic programs, minority presence declines with advancing level. Doctoral degree recipients are, thus, less representative of California's diverse population than master's degree recipients, who are, in turn, less representative than bachelor's degree recipients. Interestingly, however, Blacks and Chicanos acquired a larger proportion of first professional degrees than of all bachelor's degrees in California.

Postsecondary Education: The Net Effect

What, then, can be said about the net effect of California's system of postsecondary education on poor and minority students? Much like the situation in the public schools, this is a story both of success and of failure. On the one hand, California has made great efforts to increase opportunities and, as a result, has provided a quality college-level education to thousands of students for whom college would have been unthinkable only twenty years ago. On the other, the educational system as a whole has been unable to keep from perpetuating the status quo. At every level, that system receives a cohort of students with varying levels of skills and preparation, and rather than reducing those differences, it magnifies them. The processes of sorting that go on in the high school curriculum take place, too, in the colleges. Poor and minority students tend to be sorted into the community colleges, where the likelihood that they will eventually obtain a bachelor's degree is exceedingly small. Conversely, the student bodies in California's "senior" institutions, where most students will obtain a degree, are disproportionately White and affluent. In the end, then, considerably fewer poor and minority students receive college degrees than we would expect based upon their representation in the total population of college students.

CONCLUSION OF THE JOURNEY THROUGH SCHOOL

As this review of the evidence makes clear, poor and minority students are not well served by California's system of public education. Despite gains in some areas, the educational process remains for most minority students a bleak frontier. Pushed down and out, minority students tend to fall disproportionately at the bottom of their classes, and to drop out or continue in successively lower educational tracks. As a result, minorities are more likely than Whites to be unemployed or underemployed.

But this is not inevitable. Efforts to change this seemingly relentless process and to turn schools around have already begun to show increases in student achievement. Although these success stories are few and have not yet changed statewide patterns of achievement, they clearly demonstrate that poor and minority students can learn and that individual schools can make a difference. The next section of this report will discuss these success stories.

PART THREE
Turning Schools Around

Over the past several years, the American people have heard a number of stories about schools that beat the odds: schools that take students whom no one expects to learn and, through a combination of high expectations, tough discipline and hard work, manage to produce striking achievement gains. The network television documentary on Marva Collins' school in Chicago was one of the first "success stories" to gain nationwide attention. Subsequent accounts of achievement gains among minority students in other areas of the country have rekindled the belief many lost during the seventies: the belief that the educational problems of minority students are, in fact, beatable.

Although the overall picture in California's public schools is by no means encouraging, there are hopeful signs here, as well. From time to time, especially during test score season, stories find their way out. Several months ago, for example, President Reagan journeyed to Whittier to pay tribute to predominantly Hispanic Pioneer High School, selected as one of the nation's outstanding high schools. Media attention has also focused on recent changes at George Washington Preparatory High School in Los Angeles and at Balboa High School in San Francisco. Extensive coverage of the feats of Garfield High School mathematics teacher Jaime Escalante in generating extraordinary scores among his Chicano students on the College Board Calculus exam have also helped to destroy the fiction that ethnic minority youngsters cannot master advanced academic skills.

In these and other anecdotes there is an element of exaggeration. Schools, for example, are sometimes described as performing "above expectation" when a student population predicted to perform in the third percentile statewide actually performs in the fifth percentile. Similarly, school test scores are described as "improving" with the slightest upward movement, even if the new numbers remain at the lowest end of the scale.

Clearly, there is a tendency to vary standards according to the student population being reviewed. Some of this, of course, is understandable: if we consistently held our minority and low-income schools up to standards set by our elite private and public schools, we would probably never escape a pervasive sense of despair. We think it important, however, that Californians never lose sight of the more universal standard that, in the long run, we accept nothing less from schools serving poor and minority students than we do from any other school.

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After reviewing the evidence carefully, it is absolutely clear to us that some schools do a better job than others in helping ethnic minorities and poor students to achieve at or near grade level. Likewise, some schools do a better job than others at preparing their students for college or work. Some schools, too, have begun the process of turning around; but the changes in attitude, curriculum, atmosphere and expectations have not yet affected achievement significantly. Some schools and some programs have met the challenge of minority education and are winning.

SOME INDICES OF SUCCESS

There is no single best way to evaluate the success of an individual school. At the moment, it is popular to focus on test scores as a more or less "objective" measuring stick. But there are other outcome measures that may tell us a good deal more about success—especially with certain segments of the student population or in particular areas of the curriculum—than mean test scores.

One of these measures is college-going rates. Our review of 1981/1982 data suggests that many predominantly minority schools send their graduates on to college at rates above the statewide average. Table 7 lists some examples of success with college-bound students: schools listed here fall in the upper quartile of all feeders to the University of California.

Some schools are unusually successful in assisting poor students to obtain financial assistance to attend college. In a special analysis prepared for us by staff of the Student Aid Commission, we learned that there is considerable variation among schools in the financial aid area, even when economic differences are controlled. Table 8 lists some of the schools with excellent aid records.

For some students, job offers are the only important "outcome" measure. These, however, are not widely discussed because most schools have no means of keeping track of these matters. But most vocational programs do compile such data. As with other educational endeavors, there is considerable variation in the outcomes of these programs. Our review points to several programs serving predominantly minority

TABLE 7

Predominantly Black and Hispanic High Schools Failing in the Top Quartile of Feeders to the University of California* Fall, 1982

SCHOOL	CITY	* STUDENTS TO UC
Berkeley Senior High	Berkeley	144
Belmont Senior High	Los Angeles	50
Gardena Senior High	Gardena	45
Los Angeles Senior High	Los Angeles	41
Oakland Senior High	Oakland	40
Alexander Hamilton Senior High	Los Angeles	39
John Muir Senior High	Pasadena	38
John F. Kennedy High	Richmond	34
Geo. M. Schoor High	Montebello	34
Mission Senior High	San Francisco	29
Channel Islands High	Oxnard	25
Benjamin Franklin High	Los Angeles	25
Crenshaw High	Los Angeles	23
Montgomery High	San Diego	22
Dorsey High	Los Angeles	21
J. C. Fremont High	Los Angeles	21
Mark Keppel High	Alhambra	21
Pasadena Senior High	Pasadena	21
T. Roosevelt Senior High	Los Angeles	21
Montebello Senior High	Montebello	20
Woodrow Wilson Senior High	Los Angeles	20
J. Garfield Senior High	Los Angeles	19
Hilltop Senior High	Chula Vista	19
Blair High	Pasadena	18
Calexico High	Calexico	18
Saddleback High	Santa Ana	18
San Diego Senior High	San Diego	17

*Note: Because of limitations on the data, these numbers include both minority and majority graduates from these schools. Our analysis was further complicated by the fact that although small high schools may send their graduates to UC at higher rates than these schools, their names do not appear high on UC's feeder list. As our calculations had to be done by hand, however, we decided to rest here.

student populations that also demonstrate exemplary placement rates in *good* jobs. Richmond High School and East Los Angeles Technical Center provide two such successful vocational programs for minority students.

There are also positive indicators among school scores on statewide achievement tests. Our review of CAP data, for example, identified approximately 200 combined Black and Chicano majority elementary schools scoring above the 50th percentile on at least one of the tests. At the high school level, approximately 10 of the majority-minority schools rank in the top half of California schools on one of the CAP tests, while another 40 high schools rank between the 25th and 50th percentile.

Our review of test scores for predominantly minority schools also revealed numerous instances where test scores have increased significantly. From 1980 to 1983, over 10% of the predominantly minority elementary schools in California increased their 3rd or 6th grade CAP scores on one of the three tests enough to raise the school's percentile rank by 20 points when compared to other California elementary schools. During this same period, a slightly larger fraction of the minority senior high schools improved their ranks on the grade 12 CAP tests by 10 points. High schools improving by this amount are listed in Table 9.

A recent review of Chapter 1 schools revealed some exceptional gains in student performance here, as well. Last year some 24 schools were selected as exemplary based on these gains and on other improvements. We were particularly impressed with a description of improvements at Grant Avenue Elementary School in Stockton and Aynesworth Elementary School in Fresno.

STRATEGIES FOR TURNING SCHOOLS AROUND

Schools may be turned around in many ways. First efforts may be directed only at a

single program or part of the curriculum. Principals can turn entire schools around; superintendents can influence entire districts. The impetus for these efforts can come from within the school or from the outside

We have chosen a series of success stories to discuss here that illustrate each of these models. These combinations of scope and motivation do not exhaust the possible strategies: they are only a few of the alternatives available.

95th Street Preparatory School, Los Angeles Unified School Discrict, Grades K-5

At the 95th Street School, Principal Alfred Moore runs a school that works for his 100% minority student population. As a founder of the preparatory school initiative in the L.A. Unified School District, Alfred Moore has a clear vision of what a school should be. Located in an area of Watts where it is not safe for children to walk home alone from school and where most parents are unemployed and receive AFDC payments, this school is a model of quiet decorum, directed energy, and student learning.

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The atmosphere at the school is joyful. The children are alert, friendly, and quick to smile or wave as Moore walks through the halls and classrooms. Each classroom is cheerfully decorated with bulletin boards illustrating current lessons, the class schedule, and important announcements.

TABLE 8

Low Income Schools with High Proportions of Aid Recipients*

HIGH SCHOOL	% AFDC	NO. OF STUDENTS WITH CAL GRANT B AWARDS	PERCENT OF GRADUATES
Jordan, LA Unified	**	45	20%
Fremont, LA Unified	**	72	17%
Jefferson, LA Unified	75%	57	25%
Oakland Tech, Oakland	65	53	31%
Fremont, Oakland	45	58	15%
Lincoln, LA Unified	37	140	40%
Belmont, LA Unified	35	142	30%
Franklin, LA Unified	25	129	26%
Galileo, San Francisco	24	86	29%
Roosevelt, LA Unified	24	143	22%
Mark Keepe, Alhambra	23	86	19%
Mission High, San Francisco	23	50	16%
Parlier, Parlier	22	14	19%
Los Angeles, LA Unified	21	59	11%
Wilson, LA Unified	20	60	13%
Lindsay, Lindsay	20	14	15%
Fowler, Fowler	19	12	15%
Santiago, Garden Grove	18	28	10%
Hoover, San Diego	16	64	22%
		Average of all low-SES schools	7%

*Selection Criteria: *Low Income:* High Schools with 15% or more of students receiving AFDC bednefits.

High Proportion: Based on comparison of schools with same decile of percent AFDC students.

SOURCE: Data Provided to The Achievement Council by The California Student Aid Commission, Sacramento, CA, June, 1984.

TABLE 9

Senior High Schools With Majority-Minority Enrollments Improving Cap Scores By 10 Points Or More On At Least One Test: 1980-81 to 1982-83

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	DISTRICT
San Benito	San Benito Joint
Ganesha	Pomona Unified
John Glen	Norwalk, La Mirada
Calipatria	Calipataria Unified
Kennedy	Richmond Unified
Lindsay	Lindsay Unified
James Lick	East Side Union
Hamilton	Hamilton Unified
Mar Vista	Sweetwater Union
Montebello	Montebello Unified
Coachella	Coachella Valley
El Rancho	El Rancho Unified
Lynwood	Lynwood Unified
Emery	Emery Unified
Pioneer	Whittier Union
Fowler	Fowler Unified
Selma	Selma Unified
Corcoran	Corcoran Joint
Channel Island	Oxnard Union
Lincoln	San Jose Unified
Westside	Los Angeles Unified
Nogales	Rowland Unified
Morse	San Diego City Schools
Southwest	Sweetwater Union
Silver Creek	East Side Union
Holtville	Holtville Unified
San Benito	San Benito Joint

SOURCE: Consolidated Programs Data Base, California State Department of Education: Sacramento, CA.

Parents are a critical element at the 95th Street School. They patrol the grounds and the paths home, volunteer in the classroom, monitor federal programs, and actively participate in homework training sessions and school improvement activities. Weekly newsletters and frequent conferences keep parents informed on school activities and student progress.

The heart of the program is teaching. Daily lesson plans, small group instruction, and individualized learning centers are central to the working and learning environment. Constant efforts are made to upgrade teaching skills, to develop and maintain an integrated and exciting curriculum, and to base instruction on hierarchical skill development. The staff attends weekly meetings to share new instructional ideas and to work out teaching and learning problems. Mr. Moore carefully monitors the teachers; the teachers carefully monitor the students. Where problems arise students, teachers, and parents cooperate to improve the learning experience for all.

As a result of this comprehensive effort, the students at the 95th Street School are achieving. Between 1979 and 1983, CAP scores for 3rd grade students increased 35 points, 56 points, and 42 points (on a scale of 500) in reading, language, and math respectively. Comparable gains occurred for the 6th grade. Between 1980 and 1983, 3rd grade reading and math scores on CTBS more than doubled, exceeding the 50th percentile rank in both areas. Percentile rankings for 5th grade reading tripled, although remaining below the 50th percentile.

Bret Harte Preparatory Intermediate School, Los Angeles Unified School Disctict, Grades 6-8

The students from 95th Street Elementary and other nearby schools attend Bret Harte Intermediate. Also located in Watts, Bret Harte is surrounded by high fences, locked gates, and locked classroom doors to secure them from the

outside. As part of the Preparatory School Initiative, Bret Harte has made great strides in providing a model of middle school education for all students.

Inside the school, teachers and staff work to develop a supportive and cooperative learning environment in which each student can flourish. By mixing teachers from elementary school backgrounds with teachers experienced at the junior and senior high school level, Bret Harte provides a combination of the individualized, nurturing atmosphere of the early grades and of the independent learning and large group instruction of the later grades. Students are placed in a structured program that provides a common curriculum for all students. Each student is assigned to a homeroom that meets both at the beginning and end of the day. The homeroom teacher also teaches two of the four basic subjects to the students; then students move to the adjoining classroom for instruction in the two other basic subjects. For physical education and a special interest class of the students' own choosing, students go to other assigned teachers.

The advantages of this program are many. For the vast majority of the day, students are with one of two teachers who work closely together and are responsible for these 60 students. These teachers monitor the students' whole program and the students respond to the uniform expectations placed upon them. Each week these primary teachers send home an evaluation of the student's progress, attendance, homework, and behavior. Students are thus closely supervised, yet have some of the freedom of high school.

The staff and the new principal, Charles Palmer, are proud of Bret Harte and its students. They know the students by name, respond to their successes with joy, and treat the antics of early adolescence with humor. Strict discipline and high expectations are combined with understanding and compassion.

The initiative at Bret Harte began to show achievement results in the fourth year of operation. In 1983, the CTBS scores in reading for eighth greaders increased from the 20th percentile to the 32nd percentile. Similarly, math scores increased from the 29th percentile to the 47th. Although the staff at Bret Harte wants more improvement, the students have already begun to show clear progress.

Balboa High School,
San Francisco Unified School District,
Grades 9-12

The 95% minority student body at Balboa High is diverse. Forty percent of the 2100 students are Black, 24% are Hispanic, 5% are White, and 30% are Samoans and Filipinos. The school's SES rank is in the bottom fifth of the state's high schools. In the seventies, Balboa's CAP scores were among the bottom 5% in the state.

Four years ago Shirley Thornton came to Balboa High as principal. Moved from a middle school that was starting to show real improvement, she did not consider the step up to high school a promotion. Nevertheless, she put her energy into Balboa and has turned the school around by what sometimes appears to be the sheer force of her will.

Shirley Thornton sees it as *her* responsibility to provide a school in which students can learn, the *teachers'* responsibility to provide the skills and information for students to learn, and

Thornton firmly believes that, given the opportunity and the incentive, all students can learn.

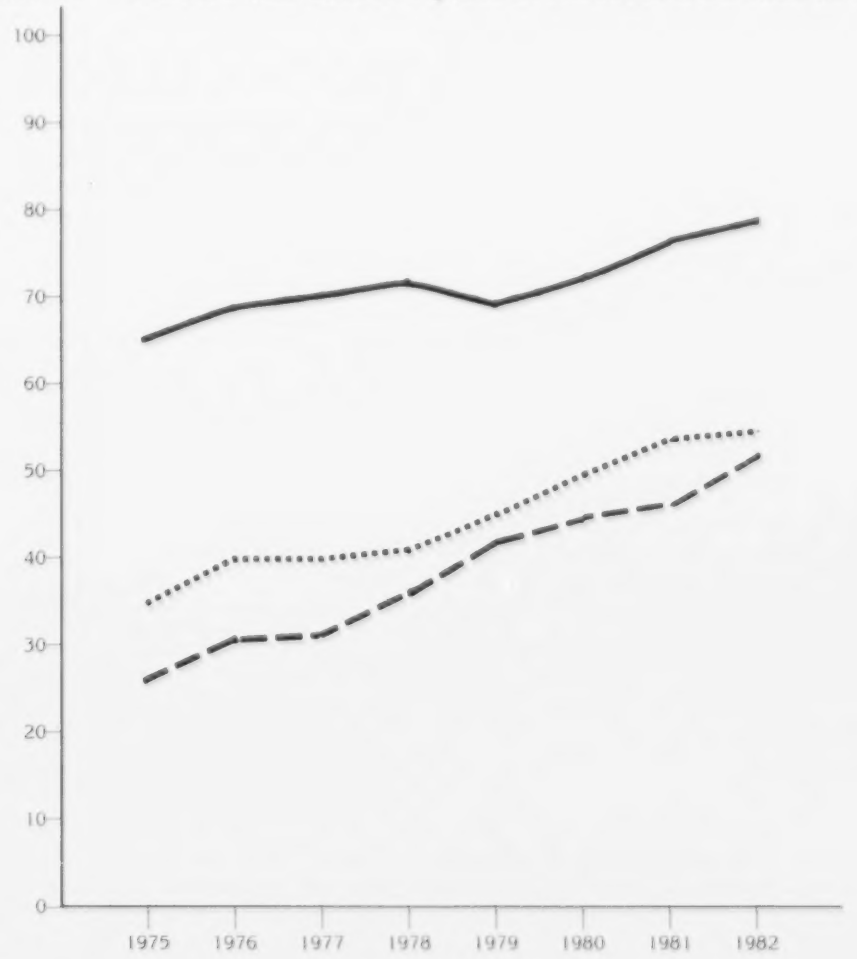
the *students'* responsibility to come to school and to take full advantage of the educational opportunities at Balboa. As she says in the student handbook, she expects the students to hold her accountable—and she will hold them accountable. Thornton firmly believes that, given the opportunity and the incentive, all students can learn.

Much time at Balboa is spent motivating students, parents, and faculty. To prepare the faculty and staff for what she expected of them, Thornton took them to visit other minority high schools that worked, sponsored school self-evaluation clinics and assertive discipline seminars. She constantly works with faculty to develop a common mission for the school.

To involve parents in the educational process, parent groups were started for each of the major ethnic groups represented in the school. A staff member of the same ethnic group serves as a liaison for the parents: someone to whom they can talk. In the groups, parents are taught how the school works, and what is expected of their children.

The Balboa staff also spends a great deal of time giving students the incentives they need to achieve. Opening day speeches, assemblies, and lectures in and out of class encourage students to learn. Each 9th grader takes a course in survival skills that includes English composition, study skills, and a college preparatory program. Each student has a folder that contains his or her academic record, graduation requirements, and college admissions requirements listed side-by-side. If students think a class is too hard, they are provided with tutoring rather than being allowed to drop the class. If students fail too many classes, they must

FIGURE 11 Achievement Scores Improve in Pasadena from 1975 to 1982



*These figures are based on weighted median percentile scores across all grade levels and subjects. They present an accurate depiction of trends within the district but do not conform to rigorous statistical practice.

SOURCE: Department of Planning, Research and Evaluation. *A Summary of the 1982-1983 Test Results*, prepared by William A. Bibbiani, Pasadena Unified School District: Pasadena, CA, November, 1983.

take a re-entry class that concentrates on learning skills and student attitudes. Balboa gives its students a focus—a reason to come to school.

In an effort to fulfill these expectations, the curriculum at Balboa has been restructured. Gradually, all non-high school level, remedial courses have been eliminated from the curriculum. All 9th grade students are expected to take Algebra I or pre-algebra. Plans are in process to increase graduation requirements. For students who have difficulty meeting these expectations, after-school and Saturday programs provide tutoring, and the basic math and language courses are computerized and available for student use.

All of this effort paid off immediately in the sense of hope and excitement in the school. The academic rewards were slower, but have begun. In 1983-1984, four years after Thornton came to Balboa, student scores on state achievement tests increased. In one year alone, the scores on the 12th grade CAP test rose by 14 percentage points in reading and 10 points in language and math. Of the 300 twelfth graders this year, 60 plan to go to 4 year colleges: more than double the number the year before. Thornton sees this as only the beginning for Balboa.

Pasadena Unified School District

Under the leadership of Ramon C. Cortines, the Pasadena Schools have made great strides in improving the educational achievement of minority students. Cortines is a highly visible superintendent working closely with principals and parent groups to articulate a vision for the schools and to set goals for progress. In Pasadena, Cortines pulls together a broad array of programs within the schools and cooperative programs with community agencies and area colleges to maintain a rich academic and supportive school environment.

Throughout his tenure as Superintendent, Cortines has kept the academic role of the schools in focus and has challenged the community and the schools to plan for future needs. As a consequence, Pasadena has maintained higher graduation requirements than the new statewide standards. Classical academic subjects like Latin continue to be taught at some of the high schools and the Arts program has been maintained. According to the State Department of Education, the bilingual program in Pasadena is one of the best in the state.

The median performance of White students in Pasadena increased from the 68th percentile to the 78th, the scores of Blacks rose from the 27th percentile to the 49th, and for non-LEP Hispanics the gain was from the 35th to the 52nd percentile.

Achievement test scores reveal the success of this comprehensive strategy. Between 1975 and 1982, the average performance of all Pasadena students on the California Test of Basic Skills improved dramatically. The median rank for students in the district rose from the 45th percentile to the 59th. The median performance of White students increased from the 65 percentile to the 78th, the scores of Blacks rose from the 27th percentile to the 49th, and for non-LEP Hispanics the gain was from the 35th to the 52nd percentile.

San Diego Unified School District, San Diego City Schools

The San Diego Unified School District has developed a highly successful program for its minority students in response to court pressure. In 1980, as part of the San Diego desegregation case, Judge Louis M. Welsh ordered the San Diego schools to raise the achievement level of minority students in 23 minority-isolated schools. He gave the district five years to reach the point where 50% of these minority students scored at or above national norms on CTBS in all three tested areas.

TABLE 10 Students in Minority Isolated Schools Scoring Above National Norms in San Diego*

	Reading	Math	Language
1979-1980	32.0%	36.0%	39.2%
1982-1983	45.3%	51.7%	60.1%

*Based on the California Test of Basic Skills.

SOURCE: San Diego City Schools, *Testing Results for Minority Isolated Schools*, Report No. 350, August, 1983.

Despite the controversiality of this decision and great skepticism as to its feasibility, the district responded in good faith. In 1983, only three years after the court order, the district reached the court's goals in a wide variety of areas. In math, well over 50% of the students in grades 1-9 in minority-isolated schools scored above the national average. In reading, grades 1-8 passed the court test and in language, grades 1-4 and 7 surpassed the 50% mark. Overall, the number of students scoring above the national average increased by 15% during this three year period.

Such significant progress is due to an explicit focus on curriculum and teaching effectiveness. The Achievement Goals Program was developed by the district using the research of Dr. Benjamin Bloom of the University of Chicago. The program is based on mastery learning, coordination with the skills testing of CAP and CTBS, directed classroom instruction, and supporting instructional materials. In addition to these aspects of the curriculum, each teacher in the minority-isolated schools has an instructional aide.

The College Core Curriculum At Phineas Banning High School

At Phineas Banning High School, counselors Phyllis Hart, Helen Monahan, and Ravilyn Brown created a program to identify potential college-bound students, to encourage them to achieve and maintain academic excellence, and to upgrade the high school curriculum to better prepare these students for college. Approximately 1100 of Banning's 3500 students participate in the College Core Curriculum. Eighth graders at Banning's feeder schools are evaluated for entrance into the program on the basis of motivation, discipline, and creativity, as well as academic potential. Students expressing a desire to learn and a commitment to study are accepted into the program even if their grades and achievement test scores are low. Once in the program, students take a rigorous program of courses based on the requirements for entry into the UC system, are assigned regular homework, and are taught study habits and time management skills.

In the first four years of the program, the number of students planning to attend 4-year colleges doubled, and those applying to the University of California went from 4 in 1975 to 90 students in 1983.

As a result of this school-within-a-school, the average number of college prep courses completed by Banning seniors increased from 16.2 to 20.7 courses in just four years. The average SAT score for Banning College Core Seniors increased by 43 points, from 402 in 1976 to 445 in 1980. Each year the number of students going to college and the number attending four-year colleges increases. In the first four years of the program, the number of students planning to attend 4-year colleges doubled, and those applying to the University of California went from 4 in 1975 to 90 students in 1983. By 1983 the scholarship and financial aid received by Banning's graduating seniors reached $2.8 million, almost triple the amount received prior to 1983.

The Cooperative College Preparatory Program

The University of California, Berkeley has developed and runs an exemplary program of external involvement in the schools. The Cooperative College Preparatory Program assists eight Oakland schools (Castlemont and Fremont senior high schools and their feeder junior highs) with the math curriculum. Under the direction of Louis Schell, CCPP has become a model cooperative program.

The CCPP staff works with teachers, counselors, and administrators to develop stronger math programs. Together, they identify talented junior high students and give them opportunities to improve their math abilities. The CCPP staff provides instructional support to teachers in these schools to help them master new skills and teaching techniques. School and university staff meet regularly to achieve uniformity and full articulation of the math curriculum. Through cooperative efforts with teachers and students CCPP is helping to build a strong academic focus in the schools.

As a result of these efforts, many more minority students are enrolling in advanced math classes. From 1981 to 1984, the percentage of seventh graders in these schools taking college prep math courses increased from 12 to 16%. The 8th grade participation almost doubled, from slightly over 12% to over 22%, and 9th grade participation increased similarly. In the two senior high schools, the number of students taking college prep math classes increased from 2% to 10%. Teachers report improved course offerings and higher standards with up to 50% more material being covered, and grading standards now match University requirements for proficiency.

THE ELEMENTS OF TURNING SCHOOLS AROUND

There is no magic formula for turning schools around. However, our examination of successful minority schools and programs leads us to suggest several critical elements:

1) *Choose school leaders who believe that minority and poor students can and must achieve, and who have the will to act on that belief.*
2) *Raise expectations among teachers, students, parents and the community.*
3) *Establish an atmosphere conducive to learning.*

4) *Involve parents and the community in the educational process.*

5) *Establish an academically rigorous core curriculum to guide the student learning process.*

6) *Provide staff development and frequent opportunities for cooperative problem solving.*

7) *Promote awareness of ethnic and cultural differences in the way students and parents respond to educational opportunities.*

This list may be surprisingly similar to much of the school effectiveness literature. In the end, though, it should not seem odd to find people interested in minority and poor students using the same terms and frames of reference as other advocates of school improvement. For ultimately our goals are the same: to create schools that work.

Although the principles and the goals are similar, however, the starting points are not. Many middle-class White schools are three-quarters around the track and need only an extra kick to cross the finish line. But most minority schools are not even near the starting blocks in the race to improve schools.

To build minority schools into challenging, rewarding, and successful schools will take more than a little rhetoric or new graduation requirements.

To build minority schools into challenging, rewarding, and successful schools will take more than a little rhetoric or new graduation requirements. It will take hard work, dedication and vision. But while schools cannot be turned around over night, it need not take forever either. Schools can begin to turn around within a year and achievement results can begin to show up in three to four years.

PART FOUR
Thoughts on Strategies to Improve Achievement

There are many educators in California today—teachers and administrators, minority and Anglo, inside and outside the confines of schools and colleges, public and private—who have dedicated their lives to assisting poor and minority young people to achieve their full potential in education. Singly and in groups; sometimes through special programs and organizations, sometimes not; and normally without extra compensation, these individuals devote enormous energy and endless hours to their tasks.

. . . educators—and their institutions—do make a difference in the lives of minority and low-income youngsters.

As is evident in the preceding chapter, these educators—and their institutions—do make a difference in the lives of minority and low-income youngsters. In individual schools and programs, achievement scores and college-going rates have gone up; drop-out, truancy, and disciplinary actions have decreased; and the often difficult transition from school to work has been eased. In others, although the focus is narrower, there are also "results": the young unwed mother whose life is touched by a teacher in a special way; the gang leader who is convinced by his counselor to give school one more try; the recent immigrant whose college professor recognizes and cultivates the extraordinary scientific aptitude hidden behind her halting English; the vocational education student whose instructor finds him a decent job with a promising future.

EXTENDING SUCCESS: TEN PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE NEW STRATEGIES

How can these and other successes be extended? Over the course of our study, we arrived at certain conclusions about strategies for building on these successes. Because these conclusions shape the recommendations that appear on the following pages—and because they can be used to evaluate yet other initiatives to remedy the underachievement problem—we set them forth below.

1. The achievement gap begins in kindergarten and increases through the grade levels: an effective solution will encompass elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education and will strengthen the connections between institutions.
2. The typical student attending a predominantly minority school does not have access to educational resources of the same quality as do students in other schools: an effective solution will remedy resource disparities, especially in relation to the curriculum, teacher vacancy rates, and teacher quality.
3. Whenever students are divided, whether by institutional fiat or student choice, disproportionate numbers of poor and minority students end up in the bottom group where students are taught less than their peers: an effective solution will move toward the elimination of educationally unnecessary divisions and branching points, and toward assuring that, where students must be divided, poor and minority students are adequately prepared for and represented within the higher groups.
4. Like everyone else, educators respond to incentives—but, at the moment there are few incentives to improve minority achievement: an effective solution will include incentives for schools to address and ameliorate the underachievement problem, and will eliminate the penalties on progress within certain existing programs.
5. Rather than involving all institutions and their component parts in responding to the needs of poor and minority students, our response has generally consisted of a series of special add-on programs, isolated from the remainder of institutional and community life. Although the importance and success of many of these programs should not be discounted, they are not sufficient to change general patterns of achievement: an effective solution will seek to engage all educators in the effort to solve the underachievement problem, promoting and supporting more efforts to turn entire schools around.
6. Almost all of the major success stories hinge not on state-wide policy initiatives but, in the end, on personal leadership from a superintendent, counselor, teacher or program director: an effective solution will include mechanisms to attract more able people to the education profession generally and to service in minority schools in particular, and will establish appropriate training and communication opportunities.
7. Most supplemental resources are focussed on students at either end of the achievement spectrum, leaving the

needs of middle-achieving students unmet: an effective solution will provide enhanced service to the middle-achievers, recognizing that—while there are many reasons why a society such as ours should provide extra attention to the needs of unusually high and low-achievers—lasting change in educational and economic patterns is more likely to occur when additional members of the underserved middle group are assisted into the upper achievement quartile.

8. There are important differences in the ways students and parents from different cultural and economic groups respond to educational opportunity: an effective solution will be sensitive to group differences, refraining from over-aggregating groups and sub-groups in both the design and implementation of educational strategies.

. . . the changes that will facilitate progress by minorities will make the schools better for all students.

9. There is mounting evidence to suggest that, even if we could eradicate overnight all of the problems in the educational system, the achievement gap would not disappear: an effective solution will counteract non-school forces that discourage high achievement and will include efforts to engage the community in the drive to encourage high achievement.

10. The underachievement problem is massive and will not go away overnight. It is not, however, insoluble, and is more likely to diminish if: (a) a broader cross-section of Californians can be convinced that solution of this problem is in their best interest; (b) it is widely understood that the changes that will facilitate progress by minorities will make the schools better for all students; (c) educators across the state are reengaged in the process of education; and (d) the problem is attacked resolutely and systematically: while each initiative need not be comprehensive, each should be part of a well-conceived whole.

LEADERSHIP IN IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT: THE ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL

As we sat down to translate these principles into specific action proposals, we were acutely conscious of the fact that recommendations of the sort we were considering could not simply be tossed into the wind with the expectation that someone would act on them. Rather, experience has taught us that progress in solving a problem as complex as the one we address frequently depends not only on the quality of the analysis and the recommendations that issue from it, but also on the presence of continued leadership and advocacy. At the moment, unfortunately, there is very little advocacy on behalf of poor and minority students in California.

With this need in mind, we spent the better part of the last year laying the groundwork for a new organization—The Achievement Council—that will serve as an informed and energetic advocate for the educational needs of minority and low-income students. Comprising leaders from the ethnic, educational and business communities, The Achievement Council will carefully analyze what works in increasing achievement and what does not, and promote strategies that promise to generate real improvements. The Council will work, along with other interested individuals and organizations, to unite schools and the community in a new push to boost the achievement of poor and minority students.

The Achievement Council will work . . . to unite schools and the community in a new push to boost the achievement of poor and minority students.

The recommendations laid out on the following pages will serve as an initial agenda for The Achievement Council: the Council will, in other words, seek California-wide changes in educational policy and practice, and will develop and set in motion broad strategies to counteract forces that discourage high achievement in communities around the State. In addition to these California-wide activities, the Council will mount during its first year a more narrowly focussed effort to involve colleges, businesses, government agencies and others in helping to "turn around" twenty to thirty predominantly minority or low-income high schools and their feeder elementary and junior highs, and will work to engage the communities surrounding those schools in an all-out effort to encourage student achievement.

FOCUSSED ACTIVITY: THE SCHOOL/COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

There are approximately 175 comprehensive high shools in California with predominantly minority and/or low-income student populations. We recommend that, beginning in 1985, 20 to 30 of these schools, together with their feeder elementary and junior high schools, be selected for participation in an intensive, four-year "turn around" effort. To get this initiative off the ground, The Achievement Council should play the role of facilitator, exploring with individuals and organizations the contributions they might make, identifying schools with an interest in and the capacity to benefit from participating, and otherwise connecting needs with expertise and resources. Council staff might, for example, work to obtain agreements from:

- The State Department and State Board of Education—to support these school improvement efforts by assigning participating schools priority in the disbursement of discretionary funds, providing specialized training, waiving red tape and unnecessary restrictions on the use of categorical funds, and assigning a liaison with the clout to free up departmental resources;
- nearby colleges and universities—to help in the turn-around process by creating management training opportunities, giving the schools first crack at participation in the Writing and Math projects and other academic partnership programs, hosting workshops for teachers of a particular subject, and providing other resources of use to the schools;
- educational organizations—to contribute expertise and manpower, and provide training opportunities;
- local community and statewide ethnic organizations—to encourage and reward improved achievement and attendance, devise vehicles to bring successful minority professionals into the schools on a regular basis, and explore other ways of creating new incentives for high achievement; and
- the business community—to provide financial support, manpower, and hiring incentives for non-college-bound students.

This initiative should be overseen by a Task Force composed of leaders from schools that have already turned the corner and representatives from programs aimed at bringing about improvement in troubled schools. To get the best from all participants—students, school and district staff, parents, and outside organizations—consideration should be given to organizing this effort on a competitive basis, matching schools with comparable institutions.

CALIFORNIA-WIDE ACTIVITY: ACTIONS FOR THE SCHOOLS

If California is to attack its underachievement problem effectively, we think it important that educators and institutions at all levels of the educational system regard improving achievement among poor and minority students as one of their foremost responsibilities. We have passed the time when our obligation to these youngsters can be considered fulfilled by special add-on programs: the size of the underachieving populations is large enough, their problems great enough, and the benefits of change broad enough to warrant school-wide efforts to generate across-the-board achievement gains.

Following are our suggestions for school-based strategies to improve achievement among poor and minority students. We think these changes will make the schools better for all young Californians.

1. ***Improved Accountability:*** Although increasing attention is being devoted to improving educational accountability, we are seriously concerned about the narrowness of the success criteria recently developed by both federal and state education officials. Especially critical, in our view, is the absence of any language on the responsibilities of our educators and educational institutions to poor and minority students: rather than being encouraged to broaden the characteristics of students included in the move upward, schools are left to generate increases in the easiest possible ways. We recommend the development of a more balanced system of accountability, centering on a set of indicators chosen to stimulate improvement in all aspects of the curriculum and among all kinds of students. We also recommend that the chief executive officers of our educational systems report annually on their efforts to improve achievement among minority and low-income students.

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2. ***The K-12 Curriculum:*** We recommend that the K-12 curriculum be carefully rethought with an eye toward elimination of educationally unnecessary branching points and channels, and adoption of practices to assure that, where students must be differentiated, this is accomplished in ways that minimize the effects of social background.

- At the elementary level, the curriculum should be oriented toward ensuring that all children develop sound literacy skills by the end of grade six. Student mastery of those skills should be assessed frequently, with indivi-

dualized assistance prescribed and provided routinely.

- Beginning in grade seven and extending at least through grade ten, all students in California should be exposed to the same, academically-rigorous core curriculum. Student progress should be assessed regularly and appropriate assistance provided.
- At those points at which students must be separated, schools should be conscious of the possible effects of any sorting process on poor and minority students and take such action as may be necessary to reduce those effects.

3. ***Teacher and Administrator Training:*** Teachers and administrators frequently report that they feel unprepared, either by background or training, to respond effectively to the educational needs of poor and minority students. However, while this much is agreed to, little attention has yet been directed toward answering the question "What do we want our teachers and administrators to know (and do) about these population groups?" To answer this important question, we recommend that a group of experts be convened—including teachers and administrators from predominantly minority schools, representatives from schools of education, and recognized experts on learning strategies, the effects of teacher expectations, and intercultural differences in responses to school opportunities—to design one or more curricular modules for inclusion in teacher and administrator training programs and to develop a series of in-service training programs on this subject.

- Our review of the process by which schools turn around suggets that the principle typically plays a pivotal role. We therefore welcome the recent initiative in Sacramento to encourage the formation of several "Management Academies," but suggest that these

focus on training leaders for underachieving schools and be developed in close consultation with principals from improving minority schools.

4. ***Steps Toward Improving Schools:*** Our analysis suggets that, in addition to leadership and training, certain steps and types of resources may be especially important in the process of turning schools around.

A. *STEP ONE: Analyzing the Problem.* In order to plan strategies for improving achievement among minority and poor students, schools need adequate baseline data and an opportunity to consider what the data mean. To facilitate this analysis, we suggest the following modifications in current educational data systems:

- The State Department of Education should incorporate ethnic and economic information on test-takers and course enrollees into the CAP and CBEDS systems;
- Drop-out data should be uniformly collected by all high schools in California and should include ethnic and economic information;
- The California Round Table on Educational Opportunity should explore ways in which college scholarship reports and other institutional data resources can be combined to provide high schools with better feedback information on their graduates who enter college;
- The state should provide support for periodic follow-up studies of those California high school graduates who do not enter college, so that high schools can better evaluate their success in equipping these students with the skills necessary for work; and
- In all of their performance-related data collection efforts, state educational agencies should give priority attention to providing schools in

the lowest achievement deciles with more detailed evaluative information and with technical assistance in interpreting and acting on the data.

The resulting data should be available for individual schools and for the state as a whole.

B. *STEP TWO: Establishing an Agenda for Progress.* Once data are in hand, we believe that it is important for each California school serving a substantial number of minority or poor students to create an agenda for improving achievement among its poor and minority students. These agendas should be established by the full school community and should lay out specific plans for improving achievement and a description of the resources necessary to do so successfully. Where feasible, the agenda-setting process shoud unite "feeder" and "receiver" institutions into coordinated planning and action units.

C. *STEP THREE: Resources for Change.* Although some actions a school might take to improve achievement are relatively cost-free, it seems inevitable that, if we are serious about getting increased numbers of marginally-prepared students through a more rigorous curriculum, it will take some extra resources to do so.

- Funding formulas should provide individual schools with extra resources for each additional student completing a particular curriculum or scoring at a specified level on a skills test. Schools should be encouraged to place resources under the direction of those who manage the remainder of the academic process — the teachers —then to hold them accountable for progress.
- Because supplemental funding may mean the difference between continued progress and a return to academic stagnation, transitional funding should be provided to low-SES schools that improve out of Chapter I eligibility. Funding formulas should reward, not penalize success.
- If teachers are to respond more effectively to the learning problems they encounter in the classroom, they must have ready access—at the school site—to curriculum specialists and diagnostic counselors charged with assisting teachers in designing individual and group teaching strategies.
- Because cooperative university-business-school programs often provide important professional assistance and moral support to the schools, these efforts should be expanded. Schools should assume a more aggressive role in forming interinstitutional partnerships by laying out their needs and seeking help.
- If plans for improving achievement are to be laid and executed with maximum effectiveness, teachers and administrators need more *common* planning and development time. All the specialists and data in the world won't do much good unless school personnel have the time to use them.

5. ***Children with Linguistic Limitations:*** Given the demographics of California, it seems inescapable that the subject of educating children with linguistic difficulties is important now and will become more so in the future. A review of current practice does not, however, leave us satisfied, much less give us any confidence that California will be able to meet the challenge ahead. We believe that much of the present problem results from a lack of attention to and agreement on the *goals* for bilingual and other linguistic support programs. For only in the context of agreement on a set of goals can available educational strategies be compared and selected. We recommend that California begin immediately to re-examine its strategies for assisting students with linguistic problems, starting with a broad-based discussion of the appropriate goals for these efforts and a thorough review of student need, then proceeding through a careful evaluation of available techniques for reaching these goals.

6. ***Counseling:*** Minority students frequently report that their intellectual abilities were consistently underrated by counselors—that they went on to higher education in spite of, rather than because of, the counselor. For this reason, it would be easy to look with glee on the current trend in many school districts to reduce or eliminate counseling staffs. To do so, however, would be to ignore how very complicated our system of postsecondary opportunities has become and to deny the importance of affecting the process by which students are informed of and programmed into (or out of) those opportunities. Though the state has recently recognized the need in ths area by incorporating additional counseling resources into the SB 813 reform package, we are concerned that, by focusing on grade 10, this provision will merely reinforce existing college-going patterns. If, on the other hand, additional resources were provided in grades 7-9—the period during which the curriculum begins to branch—there would be a greater opportunity to change current patterns. Moreover, we believe that the entire training process for counselors should be reexamined, as should the ways in which schools program students into different curricular paths.

Counselors should be trained to maximize academic opportunities for their students; they and their schools should be evaluated on their success in doing so.

7. ***Mid-Range Achievers:*** We think that state, district, and school-level policymakers—including teachers and counselors—should devote greater attention to this group, developing specific strategies to increase the number of poor and minority students reaching the top achievement quartile. Included among the possible strategies are automatic programming of students into college preparatory courses, providing information on the relationship between particular courses and future opportunities, making adequate tutorial assistance available, developing incentives for students to take advanced coursework without risk, and creating an atmosphere of high expectations.

We think that state, district, and school-level policymakers—including teachers and counselors—should devote greater attention to middle-achievers, developing specific strategies to increase the number of poor and minority students reaching the top achievement quartile.

8. ***Postsecondary Problem Areas:*** There are two problems of particular concern in the postsecondary arena. The first of these is the low rate at which minority students transfer from two- to four-year colleges. Because of the historic importance for minorities of this route of entry into California's universities and because more than eight out of every ten minority college students are enrolled in community colleges, the transfer rate presents a major barrier to increased opportunity at the postsecondary level. We think it important, in addressing this problem, that attention be directed not only to eliminating procedural obstacles but also to the more basic question of the role of community colleges within our postsecondary system. The second problem of concern here involves the disproportionately low rate at which minority undergraduates attain the B.A. Although most four-year institutions have created a variety of support services to assist students with academic problems, persistence rates remain low. Although the source of the problem is not entirely clear, we suspect that it may be quite similar in nature to the situation in precollegiate education: a series of isolated, add-on programs that are unable to affect—or even make an adequate connection with—mainstream educational activity. We can't help but believe that, if they put their minds to the task, the faculty, staff and students of our collegiate institutions could devise more effective strategies to improve student persistence.

CALIFORNIA-WIDE ACTIVITY: ACTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

If changes in the schools are to have maximum pay-offs, minority and poor students must take full advantage of the academic opportunities available to them. Our review suggests, however, that this will not always occur automatically. For a variety of reasons, many minority students do not perceive school as a place of opportunity and, consequently, do not exert maximum effort there. Changes in the schools will help, but a broader-based effort to change student attitudes—and the conditions that give rise to them—will have greater impact. Action will be necessary in at least three areas.

If changes in the schools are to have maximum pay-offs, minority and poor students must take full advantage of the academic opportunities available to them.

A. ***Parents and Community Leaders***

1. *Academic Booster Clubs:* Parents of youngsters in minority and low-income schools should organize to increase student achievement. These new organizations should have both advocacy and support functions. Their advocacy will focus on the schools (including ensuring the availability of proper course options, promoting school practices that will encourage high achievement, and monitoring the quality of school personnel and materials), on the students (including efforts to promote good attendance and to motivate students to try harder and take the most demanding courses available), and on other parents. In their support roles, these organizations might help to raise funds for supplementary materials, sponsor academic awards nights, or honor teachers who have been particularly successful in helping to raise student achievement. They might also sponsor "homework hotlines," where parents could obtain advice on helping with their children's homework, or organize neighborhood "homework houses," with rotating supervision from specially-trained parents and older peers. These clubs should be linked either with individual schools or with clusters of schools (high schools and their feeders), and should have access to such data as may be necessary to monitor progress in improving student achievement.

2. *Community Organizations:* Existing community organizations should devote increased effort to encouraging high achievement, for their advice and encouragement may be more meaningful to some students than that from either the school or the home. These organizations might honor students with high attendance, good or improving grades, and so on. Also, by facilitating contact between minority professionals and young students, they could help to promote a view of education as a means to economic or social ends, rather than as a step toward cultural assimilation.

3. *Community and Statewide Leaders:* Minority leaders and professionals in all fields should seek means of promoting student achievement on an individual basis. Increased contact between such successful professionals and young minority students is of paramount importance if youngsters are to be convinced that minorities are making it in professional fields—and that one can be a good jurist, pharmacist or accountant and not give up one's cultural identity. Some of these contacts can take place in the schools, in the form of speeches at graduation exercises and assemblies, and presentations to individual classes on how (and why) to prepare for a certain profession. But other locations are useful, too: minority students ought to have frequent opportunities to visit with minority professionals in their work places, to observe minority-run businesses, and to watch their governmental representatives in action. Unlike the "role model" presentations that have become so familiar over the past decade, these visits should

center on what it takes, by way of preparation, to get to occupation X—and a reminder that one doesn't give up one's ethnicity to get there. We recommend that, given the major fall-off in aspirations during the elementary years, these contacts be initiated in the earliest school years.

4. *Regional Achievement Councils:* Because most minority students are concentrated in just 10 California counties, regionally-oriented mini-Achievement Councils could play an important role in encouraging local schools and schol districts to improve achievement among poor and minority youngsters and in facilitating the involvement of local organizations and businesses in achievement strategies. These organizations could also be an important link between local community interests and the statewide Achievement Council.

5. *Statewide Ethnic and Educational Organizations:* Major ethnic and educational organizations in California should expand activities designed to promote academic achievement among minority and low-income youth. Included among possible student-oriented activities are awards for high achievement, honors for excellence in particular fields (including both academic and vocation-related subject matters), and scholastic competitions (modeled, perhaps, on the NAACP's Academic, Cultural, Technical and Scientific Olympics). These groups could also recognize groups, teachers, or schools that have been especially successful in encouraging achievement among poor and minority youngsters.

6. *Cross-Cultural Discussions:* Leaders from California's Black and Hispanic communities should initiate a series of discussions with representatives from various immigrant groups in order to arrive at a better understanding of the ways in which the latter view education and promote high achievement. The purpose of these discussions would be to identify practices that might be adopted by domestic groups—that might actually be taught to parents and students by community leaders.

B. *Business*

The business community can contribute to increased achievement among minority and poor students in several ways. First, simply by communicating its belief that California must do a better job in closing the achievement gap, the business community will encourage educators and educational policymakers to invest greater energy in solving this problem. Second, by continuing and expanding local business-school partnerships, the business community can help to assure that schools have adequate financial and human resources to generate desired improvements. Third, by joining with school and community representatives to devise cooperative strategies to improve achievement among work-bound students, the business community can assist in addressing the needs of a segment of the student population that is generally unresponsive to changes in college admissions requirements or to other high-end changes. We would suggest that consideration be given to:

1. support for a small discretionary fund that principals in underachieving schools could use to create incentives (dances, field trips, etc.) for high attendance and/or achievement;
2. creation of a regional or statewide incentive system (free admission to Disneyland, Great America, etc.) for students who attain specified grade point averages or attendance records;
3. exploration of ways in which local employers could foster improved achievement by increasing hiring among graduates meeting certain standards (e.g. Boston Compact), by making employees available to talk with students about their experiences in the workplace and about the desirability of mastering particular skills, or by other means.

The business community can contribute to increased achievement among minority and poor students in several ways.

Finally, and this is most important, the business community should ensure that it does not—through discriminatory or otherwise insensitive practices—reinforce the common perception among minority youth that the employment opportunities available to them are more limited than those available to other young people.

C. *The Media and Other Influences*

At present, the media—especially television—tend to exert a negative influence on the aspirations of minority youngsters. If these young people are to be encouraged toward a range of professions, not simply sports or entertainment, it is important that the television

and motion picture industries do a better job of casting ethnic minorities in a broad range of roles. There are other ways, too, in which the media can make a more positive contribution. We suggest that educators and others concerned about minority achievement facilitate change by working closely with local news staff and interested representatives from the media along the following lines:

1. A set of high-quality public service features on minority successes and the importance of trying hard in school should be produced and aired at times when large numbers of minority youngsters would be watching television.
2. In stories about minority role models, both print and electronic media should include more information about educational background and/or statements about the importance of education.
3. The media should devote greater attention to the range of careers available in a particular region and to the best strategies to prepare for those careers.
4. Local newspapers and news shows should devote greater coverage to high achieving minority students in nearby schools and colleges, and to teachers, schools, and programs that have made a difference in the lives of minority youngsters.

. . if we are truly to close the achievement gap, it is incumbent on us to examine and address all possible contributing factors—those outside the school and those within.

There are other influences on minority student attitudes toward education, as well, including the all-important peer group. It is important that these influences be carefully analyzed with a view toward altering those that impact negatively on student performance. For if we are truly to close the achievement gap, it is incumbent on us to examine and address all possible contributing factors—those outside the school and those within.